

ADVANCED DUNGEONS & DRAGONS®

2nd Edition Player's Handbook Rules Supplement

The Complete Thief's Handbook

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Introduction

The world of the thief is a world of darkness and stealth, hidden from the eyes of respectable folk, yet often under the scrutiny of the zealous enforcers of the law. It is a world of courage and fear, of bravado and cowardice, of violence and treachery.

Yet it is also a world of color and laughter, lively parties and bustling markets. The thief, more than any other character class, practices his arts among his fellow men (or halflings, or elves, or whatever). He seeks the gatherings of population, the confluence of wealth and avarice, where treasures are there for the taking.

To be sure, many a thief has proven his worth time and again in the darkest reaches of a forgotten dungeon, among the snowy peaks of the bleakest of wild vistas, or within the halls of a fortress or military camp. Quests into the wild contain as much appeal for the thief as they do for other characters. In fact, should the prospect of treasure appear significant enough, many a thief will lead the way in encouraging his companions to embark on such a mission.

But when the adventurers return to the sheltering walls of their homes, wherever these may be, and rejoin the population, the thief is best equipped to find adventure there. And when such adventure is discovered, it is thievery skills that are most often called into play.

The Purpose of the *Complete Thief's Handbook*

This book provides information of use to players of thief characters, and to DMs running campaigns including thieves. The emphasis lies heavily upon a campaign where many PCs are thieves, but there is no reason provisions in this book cannot be employed by groups with but a single thief among them.

None of the information here changes any existing AD&D® 2nd Edition rule. Instead, the idea is to amplify and detail those rules for players who are interested in playing thief characters. Indeed, it is possible and in fact quite easy to play a thief character without the information herein.

However, the player who wishes to develop his player character thief in a unique fashion, or who seeks aid in deepening and broadening the character's personality, goals, and motivations, will find helpful suggestions and ideas in the *Complete Thief's Handbook*.

But the book is a guide for DMs as well. Information on organizing thieves' guilds, for example, is essential to any ongoing thief campaign. If no guild is present, consistent information on other societal sanctions needs to be determined by the DM—and the information must be available to players as well.

Consequently, no portion of this book is prohibited to player viewing, nor is any part of it irrelevant to the activities of a good DM.

New rules and procedures only become official campaign rules in a campaign where the DM so declares. Players who wish to employ some of these materials can certainly ask the DM to use them,

but as always, the Dungeon Master has the last word.

The Role of the Thief

The skulking burglar pilfering through the night is perhaps the most common picture of the thief. Neither players nor Dungeon Masters should blind themselves to other possibilities, some of them more useful (and socially acceptable) than common theft.

The thief character kits introduced in Chapter 3 provide a variety of thief types. These are not new character classes by any means, but the kits can help players define thieves in one of several areas of specialty. Some of these include:

The Spy, long a noble practitioner of the thieflly skills. Indeed, lockpicking, moving silently, hiding in shadows, and the like are all skills of prime importance to the Spy.

The Scout can do for an adventuring party what skirmishing troops do for an army: he is a fast, lightly armored individual who can utilize stealth and speed to study terrain and watch for ambush. Thief-scouts and rangers in combination make splendid reconnaissance bands.

Other kits include the **Troubleshooter** (the dungeon-crawling thief), **Acrobats**, **Beggars**, **Bounty Hunters**, **Swindlers**, and many more.

Typical thieflly personalities are also provided, allowing players to create detailed PCs based upon these archetypes, but also providing useful pieces of imaginative roleplaying information for many long-lived, high-level PCs.

Chapter 2 describes additional nonweapon proficiencies of particular use to thief characters. New equipment types, both magical and mundane, are introduced in later chapters. And a few new rules cover areas of concern to thieves—lethal and non-lethal poisons, for example, and how to determine the quality of workmanship used to build a lock or trap.

A section on running a thief campaign provides players, and most particularly DMs, with suggestions and guidelines on ways to tailor the campaign toward the thief PCs' areas of interest and expertise.

Whatever area of the book yields the most use, players and DMs alike who wish to expand the domain of the thief in their campaign world should find many things of interest between these covers.

Thieves and the Law

Geraldor slipped through the alley, his black cloak masking his progress through the filthy passage. Reassuring himself that he was not pursued, he stepped boldly onto the Golden Way. With a nervous gesture he smoothed his oily black hair and attempted to stroke his wispy mustache.

Sighing, Geraldor realized that any attempt to look like a gentleman was doomed to failure. He hoped his guildmaster's plan was intact.

And there before him was the Highgate! Geraldor's heart pounded as he examined the brawny men at arms, four in number, manning the post. As the only public route into the city's Golden Quarter—home of all the wealthiest merchants, most powerful lords, and influential ambassadors in all the land—the Highgate was usually guarded well.

But not tonight. Geraldor recognized the giant, hulking form of Morto, sergeant-at-arms of the city watch. As Geraldor had expected—nay, hoped—Morto commanded the detachment at the Highgate.

With a barely concealed nod of recognition, Geraldor stalked to the gate and stood impatiently as Morto made a pretense of examining his "pass." In reality, this crudely forged slip would fool no one with any capacity for comprehending script.

But Morto's reading ability was not the issue tonight. Instead, the guard's loyalty to the guildmaster was the force behind Morto's curt nod and his gesture ushering Geraldor through the Highgate. Geraldor fairly skipped through the great stone arch. He had entered the Golden Quarter!

Now his movements took on the shadowy aspect of the master thief at work. Though he remained alert, he knew that the major obstacle had been passed at the gate. The hefty bribes offered to Morto and his associates had paved the way to riches. It only remained for Geraldor to haul those riches away.

The wiry thief found the mansion that had been selected by the guildmaster. Family and servants all slept, and they had no dog. In a matter of minutes Geraldor had collected the lady's gems. He spent several more minutes seeking the strongbox, finally discovering it in a small, luxurious sitting room. He picked the lock and pulled out only the most valuable coinage, platinum and gold, before soundlessly slipping toward the exit.

In the house he saw magnificent silver candelabra, a huge and obviously enchanted sword, and other wonders. All of these he disdained as too bulky for his current mission. After all, Geraldor was a professional!

Scarcely suppressing an urge to whistle, Geraldor sauntered back along the Golden Way. He would pass through the Highgate again and immediately disappear into the clustered neighborhoods that crowded both banks of the muddy river.

He saw Morto at the guardpost and nodded casually, passing under the great stone arch again on his way out of the Golden Quarter. Only then did he notice something wrong: Morto stood mute, with his hands shackled before him.

At that same instant a heavy gauntlet fell upon Geraldor's shoulder and a massive arm propelled him into the stone wall of the gatehouse.

"What have we here?" growled an unfamiliar voice. Terrified, Geraldor saw that it issued from beneath the shiny cap of a watch captain.

"J-just going home, m-my lord!" he stammered, wriggling in a futile attempt to break away.

The captain laughed, having already found and discarded Geraldor's fake pass. The man's gloved hands continued to poke through Geraldor's clothes and pouches, retrieving object after object, often with a low chuckle.

"The lady Allorana's diadem, I see—perhaps she loaned it to you!" The captain roared with hilarity, joined by the guffaws of a full company of guardsmen that Geraldor now saw in the shadows.

Then the captain's voice lowered as his hand tightened around Geraldor's throat. "Now, thief, you will find out what the laws are in our town. And you will have time to learn them while you rot in gaol!"

From even before the time, thousands of years ago, when the Code of Hammurabi first defined the legal system of a body of government, and extending to the present day, societies have created procedures for defining personal possessions. An inherent part of this definition includes the penalties due those who violate these procedures. Odd as it may sound, thieves cannot exist without some kind of legal framework.

And from the time in any culture when personal possessions come into being, there have been those who seek to remove the possessions of others and make them their own. It is for players of characters who attempt this perilous exchange of wealth, and to their Dungeon Masters, that this tome is intended.

Of course, some thievery occurs under the guise of authority, and as such falls beyond the scope of this book. Tax collectors, for example, may steal from those who regard such claims as thievery. So

do conquerors. But these are not AD&D® thieves. While they may approach the category of bandits, their “theft” demands more fighting skill and aggression than stealth.

By far the more common type of thievery, and the one that generally comes to mind when discussing the character type, is the furtive pilfering described in the incident above. Poor Geraldor has suffered the fate known to many of these wrongdoers as he is taken by the long arm of the law. But if that law did not exist, then Geraldor’s task would become meaningless.

This point is one that should be well remembered by those who play thieves as well as those who run the campaigns. Regardless of how chaotic the setting, a structure at least vaguely approximating a legal system is necessary before the thief can really begin to ply his trade.

Chapter 1:Role-Playing Thieves

Thieves are perhaps the most fascinating and diverse class of player-characters in the AD&D® game—or at least they can be, if played properly. The thief has a certain innate, charming flair, which the *Player’s Handbook* describes: “Thieves are people who feel that the world (and everyone in it) somehow owes them a living. They get by day by day, living in the highest style they can afford and doing as little work as possible . . .”

This is an accurate description of many thieves, but not all; and there are many exceptions. You will find that the character—that is, the personality—of your thief character will be very important, vital to making the thief a living, breathing person. It makes them more fun to play, too.

Personality, then, is the topic of this chapter. It comes before the chapters of technical information on kits, new abilities and so forth, because we believe that when you are designing a thief character, perhaps even more so than with other classes, personality considerations should come first. Who is this character? Where is he from? Why is he a thief—has he stolen bread crumbs all his life just to survive, or is he an idle fop who moonlights as a burglar just for thrills?

After asking yourself such questions, and answering them, you will then be better able to proceed into the technical details. Your character will exist in your mind, and the task will then be just a matter of translating that vision into working game terms.

There are three basic things to consider when putting together your thief’s background and personality: setting, social background, and motivations.

Setting

Where is the character from? This will have an effect on what sorts of skills the thief may have picked up. City, countryside, and wilderness are all possible settings; or the thief may have been a wanderer all of his life.

City: Any place where people gather in large numbers, there will be those who live off the sweat and toil of others. Besides politicians, thieves are often among this group. A city background will open many possibilities of specialization for your thief. Because a city is a complicated web of many people, each person tends to have more specialized functions. This is true for thieves as well as normal, respectable citizens.

Note that thieves in cities, especially those who have very specialized skills and abilities, are most likely connected with a thieves’ guild; or, if they are not, they will surely run afoul of one sooner or later. If your thief hails from an urban center, be sure to figure out what his relationship to the local thieves’ guild (or, in some places, guilds) is.

Countryside: A few thieves are able to make a living in a single populated, rural area. They tend to

be quite different from their city-dwelling cousins—pickpocketing, for instance, is probably not going to be practiced much without the shelter and anonymity of the urban crowds. Extortion, banditry, burglary, and various similar thefts are more typical means of making a living from the peasants and their rulers in the countryside. Fences also may work the countryside, selling wares that may have been stolen in distant cities.

Thieves' guilds often have an active hand in populated rural regions, though it is not as firm as in the cities.

Wilderness: Thieves are, by definition, those who garner their living from others, so few are to be found making their permanent abode in the wilderness, far from human settlement. Those who do are usually bandits, with a stronghold set up somewhere secure, from which they can make raids on nearby settlements or trade routes. In AD&D fantasy settings, there are also innumerable possibilities for thieves who survive by taking liberties in their relationships with the local non-humans.

While few thieves' guilds would claim any wilderness as "territory," thieves from these regions are typically affiliated with one or another organized band of miscreants. These bandit groups don't have the organization or sophistication of the urban guilds, but they are still formidable, and their rivalries may run as deep as any among the big city guilds.

A great many demihuman thieves originally hail from a wilderness setting, although they do not necessarily fit the "bandit" mold common among humans. (See the section on demihumans, below, for more information.)

Wandering: Finally, some thieves have never called any place "home." They travel town and village, city and wilderness, wherever they think fortune might grant them better opportunities. Charlatans, those who make their living by duping others with all sorts of fraud, are often wanderers: They will stay in one place as long as there's money to be made, but they hope to be long gone, preying on others' gullibility, before their scams are uncovered.

Social Background

After you have chosen a setting for your character, you should decide his social background. At the start this need only be done in a general way: select a poor (or unknown), middle, wealthy or noble class background. This background will have important effects on what resources are available to the character. Also be sure to consider how it relates to the thief's motivation (below).

Poor/unknown: Most thieves are from a poor background. Most people would just as well make an honest living, if they can. For some in the lower classes, however, there is simply no such opportunity, and so crime becomes a means of survival. The vast majority of such criminals spend their lives as petty thieves, picking pockets, mugging people foolish enough to walk the streets at night alone, perhaps even planning and executing a burglary. These poverty-born thieves form the backbone of most thieves' guilds. The guild regulates their activities as well as it can, and uses it as a pool, from which are drawn the most talented and promising. Because skill and cunning are the ultimate determining factors, many a famous thief—whether in esteem or power among guild comrades, or outside of the underworld—rose from the most humble beginnings.

An "unknown" background usually fits in with the poorer classes. This means the character was an orphan, and does not know his ancestry; his parents may have been criminals, middle-class artisans, or even wealthy merchants or nobles. Dickens' *Oliver Twist* is a classic example of a thief of unknown ancestry. For all practical purposes, the character is one of the poor people, like everyone with whom he grew up. However, a hook in the campaign may be the search for, or accidental discovery of, a character's ancestry.

Player characters from a poor background may, at the DM's option, have a smaller amount of

starting money than they would otherwise (perhaps 2d4 x 10 gp). If a player character is part of a guild, however, he has probably been accepted as someone who shows promise, and the guild may provide standard equipment and money for its apprentice—the equivalent of the usual 2d6 x 10 gp.

Middle: A few thieves may hail from the middle classes, perhaps from families of artisans and petty merchants. Such characters are less likely to be stealing for survival, though desperate financial straits may bring people to seek illegal solutions, which could tie into a whole net of crime.

Imagine, for instance, a locksmith who needs money to support his ailing mother. The landlord threatens eviction, and so forth; in desperation, the locksmith turns to the thieves' guild for a quick, easy, high-interest loan. As the family gets more and more entangled by their debts, the guild decides to accept as partial payment the locksmith's daughter (and apprentice), to become an apprentice thief.

But greed is a more typical motivation. Many swindlers come from the middle class; they decided that there are better profits to be made through dishonesty than hard work.

Thieves of middle-class origin usually have standard initial funds.

Wealthy/Noble: Still fewer thieves are from affluent families. This is partly because people with ample funds have little motivation to pick pockets; but even more, it is because thievery is very much socially unacceptable at this level. There are exceptions, of course. Wealthy privateers, raiding the trade lanes of rival nations for glory and plunder, may enjoy a high and respected profile for a time. And wealthy families of crime lords are a different matter entirely.

In any case, a thief from a wealthy family is expected to distinguish himself in some way or other—flamboyance, daring, audacity, charm—even if he hides his identity during his roguish endeavors. Otherwise, what is the point of risking life and reputation?

This question might be asked of any character, of course. And so we turn to the topic of motivations.

Motivation

Why is the thief what he is? You can ask this question even before you know specifically what his area of expertise or technical interest is. A person primarily motivated by greed could be a troubleshooter or a cat burglar, for instance, provided the job pays well.

We suggest six basic motivations: fame (or infamy), greed, justice, loyalty, survival, and whim. These are of course generalizations, and any particular character probably has motivations more complex than one of these simple descriptions. Also, characters often have more than one motivation, and different motivations can apply to different situations.

This may sound so convoluted that you may wonder why we should even approach the issue. It is useful to choose a basic motivation, however, as the basis for role-playing. As you play the character, more motivations will arise—and old ones may vanish. In this way a character may come to life.

A character who starts with the greed motivation may, in the course of his adventures, encounter a great deal of injustice wrought by the rulers of the land. He may even trace his own selfishness to the perverted values of the rulers. As he organizes his activities to oppose the rulers, then, his motivation may subtly swing towards justice. It is unlikely, however, that he would be so “converted” as to lose entirely the greed that drove him for so long. New conflicts and role-playing opportunities may arise within the character between his greed and his new-found sense of justice.

Be sure to keep your character's motivations in mind when you select his alignment. The description below of each general motivation includes a word on appropriate, related alignments. Note also that as the character develops in play and motivation shifts, alignment too may undergo change. (For a thorough discussion of alignment changes, see the AD&D® 2nd Edition *Player's Handbook*, p. 49,

and the *Dungeon Master's Guide*, pp. 28-29.)

The motivation description may also include suggestions on thief kits appropriate to this motivation. The thief kits are fully detailed in Chapter 3.

Fame/Infamy: The fabled charm of a thief's life attracts many an adventurer in search of glory. In our own real world, many thieves have achieved great fame, and in literature even more such figures abound. Infamy surely accompanies the career of many a successful thief; for some it may even be their ultimate goal. If this is the case with your character, you must be certain to bring it out while role-playing. Every action should be considered in terms of how it may increase the world's knowledge of the thief's amazing exploits.

Greed: The simplest and perhaps most stereotypical motive behind the thief's life is greed. Combining greed with sloth, the thief shuns "real" work, and lightens his load by lightening others' purses. Or, the character simply loves wealth, but is unable to get it through acceptable channels.

Characters with greed as their primary motivation surely would not be of good alignment. Although even good thieves may have a certain element of greed, it would not be the biggest factor shaping their lives.

Justice: This is a rare and peculiar motivation, since thieves are generally considered to be anything but good. The classic example of the thief motivated by justice is Robin Hood—at least as popularly portrayed, if not in historical reality. Such a character must arise in a region or nation where injustice rules, though it need not do so officially. For instance, in one town the rulers may be blatantly evil and corrupt; a thief motivated by justice may devote himself to fighting those rulers.

Characters motivated by justice will probably be of good, lawful neutral, or true neutral alignments. Remember that each alignment has its own idea of what constitutes "justice"; to a true neutral thief, for instance, justice means maintaining the balances between good and evil, law and chaos.

Loyalty: Some connection in the character's past has drawn him onto the road of the thief, and he follows it faithfully out of loyalty or debt to that past. For instance, one character might have been born into a family of crimelords; he became a thief as a matter of family loyalty. Another thief may have been an orphan, sheltered and raised by the thieves' guild. Even though his moral sensibilities may lead him to question his benefactors' and even his own behavior, his loyalty and gratitude for the life and opportunity they gave him may (at least for the moment) outweigh his doubts.

Loyalty is most appropriate as the primary motivation of lawful characters. The conflicts of loyalty versus moral imperatives may lead to some very interesting role-playing.

Survival: Many thieves from the lower strata of society engage in theft and the like for the simple purpose of survival. Player-character adventurers are prone to garner more wealth than they need for mere survival, so (unless the Dungeon Master works diligently to keep them poor) they might need a new motivation after a few successful adventures. Probably a secondary motivation (such as greed, or even justice) would come to the fore and become primary.

Thieves who steal for survival usually don't have lawful alignments, though lawful evil is possible.

Whim: Some thieves engage in their activities for the sheer thrill of it. They can survive (materially) without it, they don't need or desire the money as such, and they are indifferent to fame. They simply desire to steal, to deceive people, to pull off the most impossible heist or scam—this grants them supreme pleasure. Whim-motivated thieves range from the ennui-stricken rich man's son to the compulsive shoplifter whose desire to steal may push him to the very edge of sanity.

This motivation is most appropriate for chaotic alignments.

Sample Archetypes

By combining assorted settings, social backgrounds and motivations, you can create a worldful

of distinct thieves. Another way of making a character is to start with a whole concept of what sort of thief he is, rather than building him from the individual blocks we described above.

But where do you get such a concept? History, folklore and literature all provide colorful examples of thieves. From these you can abstract a model, an archetype, on which you base your beginning character. Like the elements we described above, these archetypes are rough and general. Through effective role-playing you will expand your thief into a more detailed, interesting, and believable character.

Below are a number of sample archetypes that you may have encountered in books, movies, and so forth. Experienced role-players will probably find that thieves they've played in the past are similar to one of these archetypes, or are a fusion of two or more.

Remember that these archetypes, like the background options presented above, are meant to inspire role-playing, not to limit it. The personality you create should provide the basis of your character, but it would be wrong to define every possible choice beforehand. Part of the pleasure of role-playing is seeing your characters change and grow; like real people, they should be full of surprises, ready to adapt and change with new situations.

The Artist: This thief is searching for “the perfect crime.” He chooses jobs for their challenge and aesthetic pleasure, not strictly for their payoff in wealth.

A drunken duke who is stumbling down an alley late at night, heavily laden with jewels and gold, would be of little interest as a target for the Artist. In fact, the Artist would be offended if someone were to suggest that he perform such a ludicrously easy theft, since it would be so far “below” the Artist’s caliber.

However, the Artist might take advantage of the situation if it might play into a bigger, grander scheme. For instance, he might play the part of a “Good Samaritan,” escorting the foolish noble to his residence, and thereby gaining the duke’s confidence. This gives the Artist special privileges, not the least of which is the duke’s unquestioning trust. (After all, how could the Artist have been a thief if he escorted the duke safely home, rather than mugging him?) From this position, then, the Artist may plan a truly exceptional theft, the sort that would stir up an extraordinary amount of public interest, but could go unsolved for decades.

The Artist is usually found in an urban setting or, less frequently, wandering. His family was surely above the poverty level, and probably even wealthy; theft for the Artist is chiefly a pastime, though it may have also become a source of livelihood. He is egotistical, motivated by whim or a desire for fame—if not fame for himself, than for his crimes, since he probably will remain anonymous.

Desperado: For some reason or another, this character is running from the law—or, perhaps even worse, the unwritten law of the underworld. In any case, he is ready and willing to do whatever is necessary, however drastic, to preserve his life—he knows all too well how soon its end may be. Delicacy and rational forethought are not the forte of the Desperado. This is the sort of character that, when discovered pickpocketing, might knife his target, lest his face be identified.

The Desperado character may be of any social background, although poor is most likely. His motivation is simple survival, and he may be found in any setting. You must be certain that you know what circumstances have led to his desperation. Desperadoes are often short-lived; either whatever’s chasing them catches up and gets them, or (rarely) they eliminate the threat and are able to shift to a less high-strung lifestyle. The Desperado either dies or changes to something else . . . though surely his old habits die hard.

Folk Hero: When the system itself is unjust, those labeled “criminals” are sometimes in fact the good guys. The Folk Hero will not sit idly by while tyrants rule. He musters all his charisma and roguish skills, and leads the fight to right wrongs and, if he can, topple the evil regime. Robin Hood is a Folk Hero of great fame. According to legend he stole from the wealthy nobles and clergy, and

gave the money to the poor, overtaxed peasants.

Robin Hood was of noble lineage, and his band did their work in the countryside, but a Folk Hero could operate in any setting and be of any social background. Imagine, for instance, a thief from the lower classes who lives in a city ruled by an evil tyrant. He and his compatriots devote themselves to the freeing of maltreated slaves and falsely convicted prisoners, smuggling them to safety beyond the evil kingdom's borders. The chief motivation of the Folk Hero is, of course, justice (or at least so it must appear to the public eye).

Kleptomaniac: The kleptomaniac is a character with a compulsion, perhaps entirely uncontrollable, to steal. This compulsion might be at odds with the rest of the character's personality; interesting role-playing may arise as the character has an internal conflict between his driving desire to steal and a guilty conscience that never stops telling him how wrong and evil his actions are. This character may be of any background and setting. His motivation might be classified (very loosely) as whim, since it lacks a rational reason.

Mobster: This character was literally raised in crime. Perhaps he hails from a family of elite criminals, leaders of organized crime. Over the years they have developed their own codes of behavior and a twisted sense of honor. A mobster is found in the city, and may be of any background. (Crime families may have considerable wealth, but if their illegal activities are well known, or at least the topic for common rumors, they may have considerably lower esteem in the eyes of good citizens than those of comparable yet honestly-earned wealth.) His primary motivation is usually greed or loyalty, and his alignment is most often lawful neutral or lawful evil. Characters of this sort often make up the backbone of the more powerful thieves' guilds.

The Professional: Thievery is simply a job for this character. He is often aloof from other, "lesser" thieves: He has little tolerance for flamboyant fools, like the Artist and Trickster; Desperadoes and Kleptomaniacs, desperate and obsessed, are sloppy and crude in comparison to his refined talents and balanced temperament; Folk Heroes are just silly. The Vigilante is a dangerous foe for the Professional, in part because he is incomprehensible to him. The Mobster would seem to be the Professional's kindred spirit, but they are too tightly bound (in the Professional's opinion) by honor and family loyalty and such trash. The Professional is bound to no absolute codes, except perhaps a contract and a clean, efficient theft. He has honor and honesty inasmuch as it is necessary to maintain his reputation for dependability.

The Professional's motivation is hard to pinpoint. Clearly it is neither justice nor loyalty; and he knows that greed, whim and the lust for fame can cloud judgement and lead to fatal sloppiness. Perhaps then "survival" would be the best description of the Professional's motive; though any Professional worth his salt does better than merely survive. Of all the archetypes, he is perhaps most likely to have a businesslike, middle-class background, though any of the others is possible. The Professional is usually based in a city, or wanders, and his services are usually for hire. He may be associated with a guild, but would prefer to be as independent as possible—other people's involvement in his work is more often hindrance than help.

Street Urchin/Victim of Circumstances: This thief grew up in an impoverished, harsh environment. There he learned that if you need something you have to take it, because no one will give it to you. People may tell him that stealing is wrong, but he cannot believe it—to him, stealing has always meant survival. He long ago lost any sense of regret for his actions. He was driven to a life of crime so long ago that it seems to him the only life possible.

This character invariably knows his setting (typically a city) inside and out, and probably has many useful connections. His social background is always lower class or unknown. Street Urchins that continue the thief's life may develop into a different archetype as they grow older; the Professional, for instance, may blossom from such a solitary young thief.

Trickster: This is a thrillseeker, a character who delights in pulling off the most outrageous and amazing scams. Deception and pranks are his food and drink; flirting with danger grants him an incomparable thrill. Thieves, such as Reynard the Fox, are often portrayed this way in fairy and folk tales.

In role-playing, you may wish to make a Trickster thief more complicated. Why does he seem so light and frivolous? Does he hide something beneath it all? Is he in fact driven, obsessed with proving himself the most clever of all? Such a character could even become dangerous to those around him if his insecurities were brought out and played upon. What if people are impressed by his antics? What if they manage to outwit his pranks, or don't find them amusing? Does he need attention, or is the thrill alone enough to satisfy him? Might the trickster be cowed into quiet humility, or pushed into rage or frustration?

Vigilante: The Vigilante is a loner, a curious sort of thief whose life is preoccupied with defeating the schemes of criminals. He finds the law too restrictive, or unenforced, and so he goes outside it to bring about his vision of justice. Ironically, the Vigilante trains himself in the very skills of the thieves he opposes; he comes to know their ways and their minds as though he were one of them.

Though he fights on the side of law, the law does not often appreciate the Vigilante. He is unsupervised, unpredictable—and therefore dangerous. This is especially true in the case of locales where the leadership is a bit on the shady side itself, perhaps riddled with bribery, graft, connections with crime, and other such corruption. The Vigilante leads a dangerous life, for he can have many powerful enemies.

On the other hand, the Vigilante may attain a revered status similar to that of a Folk Hero, if his successes become popular knowledge. Popularity might do little to ward off a powerful thieves' guild, but it can cow the more fearful of public officials into tacit approval of his extralegal exploits.

A Vigilante will, of course, not be part of a thieves' guild—that is his antithesis. He may, however, be part of some secret society devoted to justice. Such a society may consist entirely of Vigilante-type thieves, or it could include adventurers of many diverse classes.

The Vigilante may be of any social background. He might work in any setting, but the city is most common. His primary motivation is usually justice, but one could imagine it being fame, loyalty (perhaps to comrades or relatives killed or ruined by criminals), or possibly even whim.

Some comic books do a great job of illustrating the complex psychologies found in characters of the Vigilante archetype. They make excellent inspirational reading.

Demihumans

Another factor to consider when you create the personality of your thief is race. Thieves are one of the two AD&D® game classes that are open to any race (the other is fighter), so there's a great deal of racial diversity among the ranks.

Humans are assumed to be the norm throughout this book, but we'll include the occasional note when special conditions or rules apply to nonhuman thieves.

Below, for instance, we have some observations on the behavior of thieves of the various demihuman races. These suggestions are mere guidelines, generalizations; it is by no means required that PC thieves should conform to these models. PCs are exceptional in many ways, after all, not the least of which is personality. These predispositions, as you might call them, may nonetheless be useful as a starting point for conceptualizing your demihuman thief.

Reference is made below to the types of "thief kits" that the various races are likely to take; thief kits are fully explained in Chapter 3, starting on p. 22.

Dwarf

Many dwarven thieves are not stealers, as such; but rather experts in mechanical things, such as locks, traps and so on, that are used to thwart thieves. The dwarven thief, then, is often an installer of such items, or an advisor on security matters. And, naturally, knowledge of how to put something together is also useful for taking it apart . . .

The kit most favored by dwarven thieves is, naturally, the troubleshooter. Here he can make use of his knowledge and skills without engaging in the dishonorable activity of genuine theft. If you want to check how secure your jewels actually are, or whether your prison is in fact inescapable, a dwarven troubleshooter is probably the best way to find out.

Bounty hunters also are found in the ranks of dwarven thieves. They may serve the kings under the mountains, bringing back scoundrels and criminals who have somehow escaped dwarven justice—and such characters are the only bounty hunters permitted to be of lawful alignment. Other dwarven bounty hunters specialize as repossessors. They use the full range of thieves' skills to recover stolen items; and they are careful to take nothing else, thereby keeping their honor and reputation impeccable.

It may be dangerous to call either of these sorts of dwarves a thief—a grave insult in dwarven culture, in which tradition absolutely prohibits one dwarf from stealing from another. Theft within a dwarven community is punishable by banishment at the very least, and sometimes death.

The prohibition does not extend to stealing from other races, however (especially goblins), but stealing is still less than honorable and a known thief is usually viewed with caution and suspicion by his neighbors.

Dwarven thieves living outside the dwarven world either became tired of that suspicion, or were expelled from their homes for theft or another transgression. They still tend to retain a great deal of honor and the professional attitude characteristic of their race; a former criminal may even have learned from his crimes and youthful excesses, and could be a very reliable companion. A very dangerous few, however, have abandoned their racial legacy, and become treacherous and unpredictable.

Any dwarf found in a thieves' guild can be assumed to be an outcast from dwarven society.

Elf

Elven thieves are sometimes characterized as eavesdroppers or spies. Elven culture has shown relatively little interest in personal, material property; with their incredibly long lifespans, they are more aware than most of the transitory nature of things.

But while material things come and go, knowledge is eternal, and it is what the elven thief covets above all. With their higher chances for finding secret doors, and superior senses in general, elves are excellent at gathering information. Of the various thief kits, they are most likely to become spies. An elf raised in a larger human community might be inclined to take the investigator kit, but this is a rare situation. The adventurer kit is also popular, especially for the elven thief who wishes to traverse the world in search of exotic knowledge. (Note that multi-class thieves cannot take a kit, however.)

Elves are careful with preparations; they can have patience that amazes other races. They like to do research before a mission is undertaken, whether it be a relatively simple burglary or a dive into a deep dungeon to track some precious artifact.

Because of their heritage, elves are more likely than other thieves to recognize the value of archaic or obscure items, such as books and artwork. (If you are using the nonweapon proficiency system, you might let an elf check information gathering or a similar proficiency to identify or estimate the

value of such an object.) An elf is also more likely to know where to fence the item—although he would probably want to keep it for himself.

When elves do desire material goods, they are sure to be beautiful and innovative ones. Elves take a special interest in items that are long-lasting and of intellectual value (art, rare books, etc.).

Though enthralled by knowledge, elves are not overly secretive. They find information exciting, and may delight in sharing it with their friends.

Finally, elves are dependable. You can usually expect an elf to behave as a professional (though he might not be recognized as such) or a reliable guildsman (though elves prefer to be independent of such organizations).

Gnome

“Prankster” and “thrillseeker” are words that best describe the gnomish thief. He takes delight in stealing, not out of greed but because it is like an exciting game—a trial of puzzles and challenges, with a valuable prize if you succeed. Thievery is recreation rather than a profession—but the reader knows well how devoted and involved people can become with their games and recreation!

Gnomes are fond of burglary, though wall-climbing is difficult on account of their small stature. They may be infallible “box-men” (experts at lock-opening and trap-disarmament), having technical expertise comparable to dwarves’, but being more willing to put it to larcenous use.

Some have compared gnomish thieves to pack rats: Show one something shiny and interesting, and he’ll likely be so overcome by curiosity that he’ll drop everything in eagerness to discover a way to put the object of interest in his own little paws.

Bulky treasures, such as coins or awkward items that must be fenced, are avoided by gnomes. They are collectors, hobbyists who like to admire their trophies: gems, jewelry and (perhaps favorite of all) fascinating magical devices.

Also, gnomes love to put their magic items to clever use. They delight more than any other race in practical jokes. They may make themselves a nuisance to fellow adventurers and thieving partners; but, though embarrassing or amusing, such pranks are harmless. And at heart, a gnome, well-treated, is a most loyal and reliable adventuring companion.

Half-elf

Half-elves live between two worlds—and perhaps this gives them a special affinity for thievery, taking the best that both have to offer.

Some half-elves favor the world of one parent or the other, if raised and accepted by that parent’s society. But many more are wanderers, never quite feeling at home or accepted in either society.

By seeing and understanding two diverse cultural viewpoints, half-elves are acutely aware of peoples’ differences in point of view—and how to capitalize on those differences. This helps develop a well-honed ability to shade the truth and, combined with the elven affinity for knowledge, makes half-elves excellent swindlers. Targets are sometimes further impressed by a half-elf’s exotic appearance (pointed ears, lithe build, and so forth).

It is very easy, for instance, for a half-elf to enter a new town, find a likely target, discover what that person needs or desires, and then appear at the target’s doorstep with a fake for sale. A half-elf swindler will milk a town or area for however much it’s worth, and move on when things get a little too hot. Between towns he may link up with adventurers for protection (and perhaps con *them*, too), but eventually he’ll move on when he has found new territory.

Many half-elves are loners and wanderers, which is not conducive to guild affiliation. The ties of a

half-elf thief to a guild are loose, at best, unless the character has been raised in the guild structure and well-indoctrinated into its mentality.

Halfling

Sometimes portrayed as consummate burglars, halfling thieves are really motivated by curiosity. The average halfling is content to lead a simple, safe, comfortable life. But the thief longs to see and experience the world beyond the hills and burrows of his home shire.

“Adventurer” is probably still too strong a word, for even halfling thieves have their race’s characteristic shy caution, plus a healthy dislike for danger, discomfort, and uncertainty. Halflings make careful preparations whenever possible, and use their skills of self-concealment liberally. Careful scouting is always a must, and frontal assaults (whether in combat or robbery) anathema.

Many halflings have remarkably little interest in money, which can be burdensome (especially for a small person). They’ll take a good amount of loot, certainly—at least enough for a pleasant period of ease and comfort before work is made mandatory—but they are hardly motivated by greed.

Of great puzzlement to sages is the question: Where do halflings get their extraordinary talent for thieves’ skills? There is precious little locksmithing or metalwork found in their culture, and thievery amongst the halflings themselves is virtually unheard of—yet the halfling thief has an amazing knack for almost all thieves’ skills.

Coupling this knack and the attitudes just described, plus a fierce loyalty for their friends, the halfling thief is understandably in high demand for adventuring expeditions.

Other Nonhuman Races

As the *Dungeon Master’s Guide* mentions (p. 15), it is possible to design new character races for your campaign. Some of these characters likely will end up joining the thief class.

The races most commonly adapted for characters are humanoid—ogres, orcs, and half-breeds of those races; goblins, kobolds, and possibly even hobgoblins or bugbears. As thieves, these characters favor the kits of highwaymen (that is, bandits) and thugs—they prefer armed robbery, where no great deal of finesse, delicacy, or dexterity is required.

Demihumans, Cities and Guilds

The entries above describe demihumans who were raised among their own kind, and have picked up most of their race’s cultural trappings. Some demihumans, however, are found in other settings, such as human cities. Most such demihumans still originally lived among their own people, but some campaigns may include second- or even third-generation displaced demihumans. This particularly happens in large cities, where there may be ghettos of demihumans, or where thieves’ guilds have purposely raised demihumans in their midst to take advantage of their races’ special abilities and benefits, while suppressing natural and cultural inclinations (dwarven honor, halfling peacefulness, half-elven wanderlust, and so on).

Ghetto-born demihumans undoubtedly still exhibit some stamp of their “homeland,” but the tendencies are weaker. In fact, a guild-raised demihuman’s personality might hardly be recognized for what it is, if the conditioning was done well. (There could even be such oddities as a claustrophobic dwarf or a repressed elf.)

Interesting role-playing could arise from an alienated, city-born demihuman thief breaking away from the guild that was the only parent he knew, and trying to find himself in the unfamiliar lands of

his ancestors.

Code of the Professional

Do you think that a city, an army, or bandits, or thieves, or any other group that attempted any action in common, could accomplish anything if they wronged one another?

—*Plato's Republic, Book I*

One of the things that distinguishes a “professional” thief from the more common, vulgar variety is his understanding, like Plato’s, of the delicate balance of justice that even thieves must maintain among themselves to be successful.

Many thieves wish to be regarded as professionals. It is a privileged status, indicating success and the respect of the underworld. It can be an asset for business, bringing more and more lucrative jobs. Even in places not claimed as territory by guilds, there are circles of professional thieves, form the elite of the underworld.

The most basic qualification of a professional is that he is recognized as such by other professionals. This recognition is not easy to gain. A thief must build a reputation for excellence, reliability, and honor among his business partners.

A would-be professional also needs to hang out in the “right spots”, taverns and such establishments, particular places where the professional clique gathers. There they relax, share information, and make contacts and arrangements for professional cooperation with other thieves.

Attitude is the first element to be adopted by the aspiring professional. The professional attitude says thieving is a business, and should be conducted as neither more nor less than one. The professional is not contemptuous of his victims; they simply failed to protect their property adequately, and suffered the economic consequences.

Professionals develop an unwritten code of conduct, guidelines for behavior. Its exact contents vary from place to place; the only universal rule seems to be the prohibition of “squealing.” A typical “code” is as follows, with its elements listed in order of importance:

1. A professional thief does not “squeal”: If captures by authorities in the course or as a consequence of a job, he must not reveal the identities of his partners, fences, informants, or other professional contacts.

2. A professional thief will honestly report how much money or valuables are taken in a job; he will not “burn” his partners.

3. A mob of professional thieves will share their score equally among themselves, or according to the contribution of each to the job, arranged and agreed upon beforehand.

4. A professional thief will share some of his earnings with other professional thieves who have been incarcerated (to help pay fines, bribe officials, etc.).

5. If a professional thief has valuable information (e.g., attractive targets, location of traps, and the activities of the town watch), he will share it with other professionals.

6. Professional thieves will help one another, even in spite of personal differences or enmity

between them.

As stated above, not all of these rules are recognized in each circle of professional thieves; but some sense of honor is vital to the attitude and behavior that mark a professional and gain him the recognition as a “good burglar.” The penalty for breaking the professional code can be at least as severe as breaking the law. A few transgression may be overlooked by the criminal community, but a pattern of consistent disregard for the code will cause a character’s reputation to deteriorate. Other thieves will not invite the character to be a partner in jobs; silence and cold stares will greet him at his favorite social establishments; and fences may even refuse to purchase the goods he acquires. He also runs the risk of former associates squealing on him.

In the worst situation—say, a thief burns his partners, squeals on them, and then skips town for some foreign port—the offending thief could not only be expect his professional reputation to be ruined, but he had better keep an eye over his shoulder, watching for assassins and bounty hunters hired by his former associates, or by their friends or families.

On the other hand, there are considerable benefits for the thief who adheres to the code. He will gain the respect and trust of his associates. He is not immune from dishonorable thieves, who may try to burn him or squeal on him; but he will have the support and approval of others in exacting revenge on those who wrong him. Also, if he is captured and imprisoned by authorities, he can expect the privilege of the fix; the guild contacts (or less formal contacts) may arrange his release through bribes or favors. Even if the professional does not have access to the money needed, other thieves, knowing that he’d do the same for them, will pitch in until the necessary amount has been gathered.

Chapter 2: Proficiencies

The use of nonweapon proficiencies in your campaign is highly recommended, especially if you are going to make use of the thief kits that we present in this book. Proficiencies are the best way to quantify the various talents that distinguish one thief kit from another.

This chapter is entirely devoted to nonweapon proficiencies. It includes a reference table with a complete list of proficiencies available to thieves, including several that are new. The new proficiencies are described below.

Table 1: NONWEAPON PROFICIENCIES—THIEVES

GENERAL PROFICIENCIES*	THIEF PROFICIENCIES*	NEW THIEF PROFICIENCIES**
Agriculture	Ancient History	Alertness***
Animal Handling	Appraising	Animal Noise
Animal Training	Blind-fighting	Astrology
Artistic Ability	Disguise	Begging
Blacksmithing	Forgery	Boating***
Brewing	Gaming	Endurance
Carpentry	Gem Cutting	Fast-talking
Cobbling	Juggling	Fortune Telling
Cooking	Jumping	Herbalism
Dancing	Local History	Hunting

Direction Sense	Musical Instrument	Information Gathering
Etiquette	Reading Lips	Intimidation
Fire-building	Set Snares	Locksmithing
Fishing	Tightrope Walking	Looting
Heraldry	Tumbling	Navigation
Languages, Modern	Ventriloquism	Observation***
Leatherworking	Reading/Writing	
Mining	Religion	
Pottery	Survival	
Riding, Airborne	Tracking	
Riding, Land-based	Trailing	
Rope Use	Voice Mimicry	
Seamanship		
Seamstress/Tailor		
Singing		
Stonemasonry		
Swimming		
Weather Sense		
Weaving		

* Proficiencies listed in this column are fully described in the AD&D® 2nd Edition *Player's Handbook*, pp. 56-65.

** These new proficiencies for thieves are described in the text of this chapter.

*** If the DM so wishes, these may be considered general proficiencies, available to characters of any class without additional nonweapon proficiency slot cost.

New Proficiencies

Each description below starts with the following information: the name of the proficiency, the number of slots required for its selection, the relevant character statistic (e.g., Intelligence), the check modifier for using the proficiency, and the thief kit(s) for which this proficiency is appropriate (i.e., required or recommended).

Thieves of any kit may choose any of these new proficiencies. However, if the kit is not listed as appropriate in the proficiency's description, then an additional proficiency slot beyond the number listed is required, just as if the proficiency were restricted to another class (cf. *Player's Handbook*, p. 54). This is why a "# of slots required" is always listed, even though a given proficiency may not cost any slots to thieves who take certain kits.

Alertness

1 slot, Wisdom, +1 modifier.

Required: Burglar.

Recommended: All.

A character with this proficiency is able to instinctively notice and recognize signs of a distur-

bance in the immediate vicinity, reducing by 1 in 6 the character's chance of being surprised whenever he makes a successful proficiency check.

Animal Noise

1 slot, Wisdom, -1 modifier.

Recommended: Bandit, Bounty Hunter, Smuggler.

A character with this proficiency is capable of imitating noises made by various animals. A successful proficiency check means that only magic can distinguish the noise from that of the actual animal being imitated. A failed die roll means that the sound varies from the correct noise in some slight way.

If the die roll fails, this does not mean that all creatures hearing the noise know that the sound is fake. While creatures and humanoids that are very familiar with the noise know this automatically, other creatures or characters in earshot may require Wisdom checks to determine if they detect the fake.

Bandits and Smugglers often use this ability for communication on the job, almost as a variant dialect of thieves' cant.

Begging

1 slot, Charisma, special modifiers.

Required: Beggar.

Recommended: Assassin, Bounty Hunter, Burglar, Cutpurse, Spy.

This proficiency serves two functions. First, it allows the character to pose convincingly as a beggar; success is automatic, so no proficiency check needs to be made. This function is used most by Assassins, Bounty Hunters and Spies in the pursuit of their assignments.

A character can also use begging to procure a very minimal daily income. (Many Cutpurses are in fact beggars who aren't getting enough—and vice versa.) Success requires first that there be people to beg from—people with money to give. A character in an abandoned castle or a recently pillaged village are virtually assured of failure.

The following modifiers are suggested to the DM as guidelines. They do not consider the wealth of a locale, just the population density. Impoverished regions might have greater negative modifiers—but then, so might affluent areas with traditions of stinginess.

Table 2: SUGGESTED BEGGING MODIFIERS

Locale	Modifier
Uninhabited/ Wilderness	Automatic Failure
Countryside	-7
Hamlet, Village	-5
Town	-2
City	0

If a proficiency check is successful, then a character is able to panhandle enough money, goods or services that day to meet his basic needs (a little food and drink, a place to sleep).

The DM may also use the proficiency check for specific single actions—e.g., a character in dis-

guise as a beggar accosts a specific NPC.

The begging proficiency may not be used to force player characters to give money away; players are always free to decide if and how generous their characters are in response to supplications.

Boating

1 slot, Wisdom, +1 modifier.

Recommended: Adventurer, Bounty Hunter, Smuggler.

A character with boating proficiency is needed to guide a boat down a rapid stream or to reduce the dangers of capsizing a canoe or kayak. In addition, a character with boating proficiency can insure that a boat is propelled at its maximum speed.

Note that this proficiency is distinct from Navigation and Seamanship, which apply to ships on oceans, seas, or at least large lakes, rather than small craft on smaller lakes and rivers.

Endurance

2 slots, Constitution, 0 modifier.

Recommended: Thug.

This proficiency is normally restricted to warriors. Its description is on p. 58 of the *Player's Handbook*.

Fast-Talking

1 slot, Charisma, special modifier.

Required: Swindler.

Recommended: Acrobat, Adventurer, Fence, Investigator, Smuggler, Troubleshooter.

Fast-talk is the art of distraction and conning. If a successful proficiency check is made, the fast-talker is able to get away with whatever scam he is attempting. Modifiers are based on the Intelligence and Wisdom of the target, as shown on Table 3. The DM may also introduce modifiers according to the difficulty or plausibility of what the character is attempting.

Table 3: FAST-TALKING MODIFIERS

Target's Intel.	Modifier	Target's Wisdom	Modifier
3 or less	n/a	3	-5
4-5	-3	4-5	-3
6-8	-1	6-8	-1
9-12	0	9-12	0
13-15	+1	13-15	+1
16-17	+2	16-17	+3
18	+3	18	+5
19	+5	19+	n/a
20	n/a		

Modifiers are cumulative. Targets of Intelligence 3 or less are so dim that attempts to fast-talk them fail automatically because they can't follow what's being said. (Creatures that are so stupid are easy

to fool in other ways, however.) Targets with Intelligence of 20 or more or Wisdom of 19 or more are impervious to fast-talking.

Example: Julina the Silent, spy extraordinaire, is discovered by guards as she sneaks around the emperor's palace. She quickly decides to fast-talk them into believing that she is the mistress of the Steward of the palace and she just got lost in the labyrinthine halls. Unknown to Julina, the Steward is an elderly, faithfully and happily-married gentleman; and it is possible that the guards know of this reputation. The DM assumes the guards to have average Intelligence and Wisdom (no modifier), but he adds a -3 modifier because Julina's story contradicts the Steward's reputation. A 1d20 roll of 7 is less than 10 (Julina's Charisma of 13, with the -3 modifier), so she succeeds. The guards buy her story, and suggest that she go where she belongs immediately. If she failed they would call her bluff—and perhaps escort her straight to the door of the Steward and his wife!

Fortune Telling

2 slots, Charisma, +2 modifier (see below).

Recommended: Swindler.

This nonweapon proficiency covers knowledge of a variety of methods of divination—all of them fake. The thief with Fortune Telling is familiar with numerous devices and methods, such as tarot cards, palm reading, interpreting the flight of sparrows or the arrangement of a sacrificed animal's entrails, and so forth—or at least the thief is familiar enough with these practices to make it appear that he's an authentic soothsayer. (If fortune telling can make accurate predictions in the DM's campaign, this proficiency does not necessarily enable the thief to do so; it confers no magical powers.) The thief makes up the prediction he wishes to tell.

A successful proficiency check indicates that the thief's customer or client believes the fortune he was told to be authentic. If the check fails, the sham is discovered in some way, or the prediction is simply not believed. If the DM wishes, the same modifiers described for fast-talking (above) may be used, based on the Intelligence and Wisdom of the subject and the believability of the fortune predicted.

Optional Rule: If a natural 1 (or another number secretly chosen by the Dungeon Master before the die is rolled) comes up, the event that the thief predicted actually comes true!

Herbalism

2 slots, Intelligence, -2 modifier.

Recommended: Assassin, Bounty Hunter.

A knowledge of herbs, particularly those with poisonous qualities, is of value to Assassins and Bounty Hunters. And Scouts often learn the types and properties of plants in their wilderness journeys. This proficiency is normally restricted to priests and wizards. Its description is on p. 59 of the *Player's Handbook*. See also p. 26 of this book for information on the use of this proficiency with the assassin thief kit.

Hunting

1 slot, Wisdom, -1 modifier.

Recommended: Bounty Hunter.

This proficiency is normally restricted to warriors. Its description is on p. 59 of the *Player's Handbook*.

Information Gathering

1 slot, Intelligence, special modifiers.

Required: Beggar, Fence, Investigator, Spy.

Recommended: Adventurer, Assassin, Bounty Hunter, Burglar, Cutpurse, Smuggler, Swindler, Troubleshooter.

This proficiency represents the ability to gather information from the underworld, most commonly about roguish “jobs” and characters. A character with this proficiency, in appropriate circumstances, will be aware of any major rumors circulating among the lowlife of an area; and with a successful proficiency check, specific information about a person or place can be gathered. (The DM must decide how specific the information is.)

The following modifiers may adjust the proficiency check:

Characters’ reaction adjustments (based on Charisma) should benefit or penalize the roll, assuming contact with people is involved in the search.

Thieves’ guild members receive a bonus of +2, because they are assumed to have more and better-informed contacts than freelancers. Also, their “territory” (below) is considered to be that of the guild, not just their own area of operation.

Since this proficiency depends on a network of informants and contacts, the thief will be at a disadvantage trying to use it in an area other than his own territory. “Territory” refers to his regular base of operations—a town, one neighborhood of a city, or even a whole province or countryside. Outside this territory the thief does not hear rumors automatically (a normal proficiency roll is required), and gathering specific information suffers a penalty of at least -3. The DM may make it greater in truly foreign areas (e.g., a thief of Waterdeep trying to gather information in Calimshan), due to great differences in language, culture or race.

Finally, any time a proficiency check is required for information gathering, a small investment of money for drinks, bribes, and so forth must be made, or an additional penalty of -3 is imposed. A total of 1d10 gp is typical, and it is lost whether or not the desired information is found. (If the information is still unknown, the character can continue his search the next day, spending more money and making another proficiency check.) The DM is free to increase the cost of using this proficiency if it suits the campaign.

Examples:

1. Urlar is hanging around the local tavern in his neighborhood when he hears rumors of a dragon to the north, recently slain as it raided a village. The dragon’s cave and treasures are as yet undiscovered. But some bragging adventurers are said to have found a map to them. Urlar’s contacts provide this information to him automatically, while another PC would need to approach people, talk with them, and probably buy them several drinks in order to learn of the map and treasure.

2. His greed sparked, Urlar wants to know who these adventurers are, so that he can steal their map and find the dragon’s hoard for himself. This requires a couple of drinks (a 2 gp investment); and the proficiency check has a -1 penalty because of Urlar’s low Charisma (7). Urlar’s Intelligence is 10, so he needs to roll a 9 or lower to find out who the adventurers are. If they are not very well known, he may need to make additional checks to track them down (find where they are staying, what temples they visit, or whatever).

3. Julina the Silent is hired as a spy to infiltrate the emperor’s palace. She needs to find an easy way in—a sewer, service exit, or the like. She has an expense account from her employers for bribes. Her Intelligence is 14 and her modifiers are: +1 (for Charisma 13 reaction adjustment), +2 (thieves’ guild member), and -3 (for this not being her home territory); so she must roll 14 or lower on 1d20 to

get the information she needs.

It's best to role-play information searches whenever possible.

Intimidation

1 slot, ability special, special modifier.

Required: Thug.

Recommended: Bandit, Bounty Hunter, Buccaneer.

This is a talent for bending people to your will by scaring the living daylights out of them. NPCs who are intimidated are quite likely to do what they're told, out of fear. On the negative side, they are also very likely to harbor much resentment against the character that intimidates them. The NPCs will keep their resentment hidden—until the first chance to avenge their pride arises.

Intimidation may be attempted with one of two abilities: Strength or Charisma. If Strength is used, the thief is threatening immediate, personal bodily harm. If Charisma is used, the intimidation consists of more subtle threats, which need not be physical. If successful, the NPC is convinced that the thief is ready and capable of making his life miserable—if not immediately, then in the near future.

Player characters are never forced to submit to intimidation, as this would detract from the players' freedom to role-play.

Locksmithing

1 slot, Dexterity, 0 modifier.

Recommended: Troubleshooter, dwarf and gnome thieves.

This is the specialized skill of making locks. It is treated like other "craft" proficiencies when checking for success. Also, thieves with this proficiency gain a 10% bonus to their lockpicking skill, because they are intimately familiar with the internal structure and working of so many locks.

Besides troubleshooters, dwarf and gnome thieves of any kit can take the locksmithing proficiency to fill one slot, because of the tradition of craftsmanship and mechanical things in their cultural heritages.

Looting

1 slot, Dexterity, 0 modifier.

Required: Burglar.

Recommended: Adventurer, Bandit, Buccaneer, Thug.

This proficiency represents a knack for grabbing the best loot in the shortest time. For instance, a cat burglar breaks into a room in a wealthy mansion. He has about two minutes to fill his backpack, so that he can escape before guards are summoned by magical alarms. If his proficiency check succeeds, he is able to recognize and stuff into his pack the most valuable combination of items that is feasible, given his limitations of time and space.

Navigation

1 slot, Intelligence, -2 modifier.

Required: Buccaneer.

Recommended: Smuggler.

This proficiency is normally restricted to priests, warriors, and wizards. Its description is on p. 61 of the *Player's Handbook*.

Observation

1 slot, Intelligence, 0 modifier.

Required: Beggar, Cutpurse, Investigator, Spy, Swindler, Troubleshooter.

Recommended: Assassin, Bounty Hunter, Burglar, Fence, Smuggler.

Characters with this proficiency have cultivated exceptionally acute powers of observation. The DM may ask for a proficiency check (or secretly roll it himself) anytime there is something subtly askew; he may also allow characters with observation to increase their chance of finding secret or concealed doors by 1 in 6. The proficiency covers all the senses.

Example: Julina is questioning a man who claims to be a craftsman who has worked on the palace; she is searching for the most discreet entrance. The DM secretly rolls an observation proficiency check; it is successful. "You notice," he tells her, "that his hands are in beautiful condition, entirely lacking callouses." From this observation, Julina may deduce that the man is actually just posing as a craftsman; he may be a con man taking advantage of a few free drinks or coins, or he could even be a spy for her enemies.

Reading/Writing

1 slot, Intelligence, +1 modifier.

Recommended: Investigator, Spy.

This proficiency is normally restricted to priests and wizards. Its description is on p. 61 of the *Player's Handbook*.

Survival

2 slots, Intelligence, 0 modifier.

Required: Bandit.

Recommended: Bounty Hunter.

This proficiency is normally restricted to warriors. Its description is on p. 63 of the *Player's Handbook*.

Tracking

2 slots, Wisdom, 0 modifier.

Required: Bounty Hunter.

Recommended: Assassin.

This proficiency is normally restricted to warriors. Its description is on p. 64 of the *Player's Handbook*.

Trailing

1 slot, Dexterity, special modifiers.

Required: Assassin, Cutpurse.

Recommended: Beggar, Bounty Hunter, Investigator, Spy, Thug, Troubleshooter.

Trailing resembles tracking, except tracking is associated chiefly with the wilderness, and trailing typically is used in major urban centers (i.e., cities and large towns). It is the talent of tailing someone—of keeping a certain distance or even catching up to them, though they may be attempting to blend into a crowd, or at least get lost in the confusion of a street full of people.

A proficiency check is first made to see if the thief is able to trail without being noticed. If the person followed has the alertness proficiency, then the thief suffers a -5 penalty.

If the thief is noticed, the person being followed may attempt to evade. To keep from losing the trail, the thief must make another proficiency check. A modifier from -3 to +3 (varying from first time in a foreign city to the thief's home neighborhood) may be used, if the DM so chooses, to reflect how well the thief knows the area. Warn the player beforehand if you will apply modifiers (though you needn't tell exactly what they are).

The DM should feel free to use situational modifiers on these rolls. For example, if a street is relatively clear, the thief should get -1 or -2 on an attempt to follow unnoticed, but +1 or +2 if he has been seen and is chasing after his subject. The opposite numbers could be used for exceptionally crowded situations, or at night.

For any Trailing proficiency roll, a -3 penalty applies if the person followed has the Trailing proficiency as well (and, presumably, knows better how to foil the tricks of his own trade).

Example: Julina is trailing an NPC through the Imperial capital, because she suspects that he is spying for a rival employer and has information that would be valuable for her. It is nighttime, on a nearly deserted street. The DM informs Julina of this, and says that she'll have trouble going unnoticed (-2 modifier on her first roll, he rules, but does not tell her); but if her quarry does spot her, he'll be easier to chase (+2). The DM also decides that Julina has been in the capital on this job long enough that she's fairly familiar with the streets and alleys, so she will not suffer a penalty on that account. However, unbeknownst to Julina, the spy she follows has both alertness (-5 modifier) and trailing proficiencies (-3 modifier). This means that her first roll has an adjustment of -10; if it fails, the second will have an adjustment of -6. Julina's Dexterity is 17. She needs to roll 7 or lower on her first roll, but gets a 13 and fails. "The man has spotted you," says the Dungeon Master. "He speeds up and ducks around a corner, into an alley." Julina follows; to keep from losing him, she needs to get an 11 or lower. She rolls an 11, just barely making it. "The alley is empty—you are about to rush through to the next street, but through a window you spot a flash of red, like the man's coat, and hear footsteps up a staircase in the building to your right."

Voice Mimicry

2 slots, Charisma, special modifiers.

Recommended: Assassin, Spy.

Voice mimicry is the art of convincingly imitating the voices of other people. It is a very demanding skill, needing intense training of and practice with the vocal cords. For this reason it requires two nonweapon proficiency slots.

A character with voice mimicry is able to imitate any accent he has heard. Success is automatic unless people who themselves speak in that accent are his listeners; in such a case, a proficiency roll is required (with a +2 modifier).

More difficult is the imitation of a specific person's voice. To do this, the thief must, of course, be familiar with the voice. A proficiency check is needed to determine if the imitation is detected; modifiers depend on how well the listeners know the voice that is being mimicked. Success is of course certain if the listener is a stranger, someone who has never heard the original voice. To fool an

acquaintance, there is no modifier; while fooling a friend of the subject is at -2, a close friend -5, and someone extremely close (e.g., parent or spouse—someone who has had close contact with the person for years) is at -7.

This ability is often used in conjunction with the disguise proficiency. Which proficiency must be checked first depends on whether the character is seen or heard. If the disguise first is successful, there is a +5 modifier to the voice mimicry—the listeners have already accepted the appearance, so they are less likely to doubt the voice. If the disguise fails, it doesn't matter how good the voice imitation is. If the voice is successfully mimicked first, it gives a +1 modifier to the disguise check.

Demihumans and Nonweapon Proficiencies

Each demihuman race has its own culture and crafts, and these may be quantified by nonweapon proficiencies. Below is listed each nonhuman AD&D® character race, along with the nonweapon proficiencies that are most highly recommended because they reflect the demihumans' heritage.

Note that these proficiencies are merely recommended, for the sake of characterization. Players are not required to choose from these lists for their demihuman thieves; nor do they receive any as bonus nonweapon proficiencies. If a proficiency is not recommended for the demihuman thief's kit or class, it costs another proficiency slot, just as it would for any other character.

Optional Rule: A demihuman using a recommended proficiency may get a bonus of +1 on any proficiency check he may be required to roll.

Nonweapon proficiency recommendations are listed by category (General, Thief, etc.).

Dwarves

General: Artistic Ability, Blacksmithing, Brewing, Direction Sense, Fire-Building, Mining, Pottery, Rope Use, Stonemasonry.

Thief: Ancient History, Appraising, Blind-fighting, Gem Cutting, Set Snares.

Priest: Engineering.

Warrior: Armorer, Endurance, Mountaineering, Survival (Hills, Mountains), Weaponsmith.

New: Intimidation, Locksmithing.

Elves and Half-Elves

General: Animal Handling, Artistic Ability, Dancing, Direction Sense, Etiquette, Leatherworking, Rope Use, Seamstress/Tailor, Singing, Weather Sense, Weaving.

Thief: Ancient History, Gaming, Jumping, Local History, Musical Instrument, Set Snares, Tight-rope Walking, Tumbling.

Priest: Healing.

Warrior: Animal Lore, Bowyer/Fletcher, Hunting, Survival (Woodland), Tracking.

Wizard: Ancient Languages, Astrology, Herbalism, Reading/Writing, Spellcraft.

New: Alertness, Animal Noise, Observation.

Because of their mixed heritage, half-elves may have the full diversity of their human parent, or they may be inclined to take proficiencies like those of other elves (above). It probably depends on who raised the half-elf thief and where. If the optional demi-human proficiency bonus for recommended proficiencies is used, half-elves should receive it when they use the elven-recommended proficiencies listed above, regardless of where they were raised.

Gnomes

General: Artistic Ability, Blacksmithing, Brewing, Carpentry, Cobbling, Mining, Pottery, Rope Use, Stonemasonry.

Thief: Ancient History, Appraising, Disguise, Forgery, Gaming, Gem Cutting, Juggling, Local History, Set Snares, Ventriloquism.

Priest: Ancient Languages, Engineering, Herbalism.

Warrior: Survival (hills, woodlands).

Wizard: Spellcraft.

New: Animal Noise, Locksmithing.

Halflings

General: Agriculture, Brewing, Carpentry, Cobbling, Cooking, Leatherworking, Pottery, Seamstress/Tailor, Weaving.

Thief: Forgery, Gaming, Juggling, Local History, Musical Instrument, Set Snares, Tumbling.

Priest: Healing, Herbalism.

Warrior: Bowyer/Fletcher.

New: Alertness, Animal Noise, Begging, Fast-Talking, Fortune Telling, Observation, Trailing.

Chapter 3: Thief Kits

Are you tired of playing plain, old, pick-a-few-pockets-and-open-a-few-locks thieves, even if AD&D® 2nd Edition makes them slightly more interesting than their predecessors? Do you want still more interest, more variety—but don't want to worry about working out all the details yourself? Then the thief kits may be just the thing for you.

Here we will show you how to create and play all sorts of thieves. They are presented in kits. Each kit defines a particular type of thief—his characteristics, abilities, and limitations. You are also invited to design your own kits, and we include suggestions on how you might do this.

Kits and Thief Types

Each type of thief described in this chapter is defined by means of a kit. A kit is made up of the following elements, following the style of the warrior kits in the AD&D® 2nd Edition *Complete Fighter's Manual*:

Description: The kit explains the thief type, describing the typical appearance, manner, cultural background, and use of the character in a campaign. It also lists any requirements necessary for a character to take the kit.

Role: Many of these thief types arise in particular social contexts. A Fence, for instance, exists because other thieves need to market stolen goods. The kit will therefore describe the role of the Fence in his society, and may suggest how he might function in relation to the rest of the fantasy adventure campaign.

Under "Role" you will also find notes on the personalities or backgrounds typical for thieves of this kit. This reflects our earlier discussion of "role-playing thieves," where we examined setting,

social background and motivations, and presented a few thief archetypes.

Secondary Skills: If you have chosen to use the Secondary Skills rules from AD&D® 2nd Edition (see *Player's Handbook*, p. 53), then your kit may require your thief to take a specific skill, or choose from a limited range of choices. You might not be able to choose or roll randomly from among all the secondary skills listed in the *Player's Handbook*.

Weapon Proficiencies: If you're using the weapon proficiency rules from AD&D® 2nd Edition, then your kit could require your thief to take specific weapon proficiencies. Or, he might have to choose one from a limited range; the Bandit, for instance, is required to take one bludgeoning weapon.

Some kits (Assassins, for example) are permitted a wider range of weapons than normal thieves. This, too, is noted under weapon proficiencies.

Unlike nonweapon proficiencies, below, weapon proficiencies required for a thief kit are NOT bonuses unless otherwise specified. They must be taken to fill the weapon proficiency slots normally given to a first level thief.

Nonweapon Proficiencies: If you have chosen to use the nonweapon proficiency rules from AD&D® 2nd Edition, then you will find useful the information in each kit on what proficiencies are required or recommended for that sort of thief. The Bounty Hunter, for instance, is required to take the tracking proficiency; and a number of other proficiencies related to wilderness survival and tracking down people are recommended.

Note that required proficiencies are bonuses, given in addition to the nonweapon proficiency choices that you may make as usual. Sometimes a bonus proficiency will come from a group other than the General or Thief groups, but (since it is a bonus anyway) it doesn't matter how many extra slots it would otherwise be required to occupy.

When a proficiency is only recommended in a thief kit, it is not given automatically to the character. If the character decides to take a recommended nonweapon proficiency, it is chosen to fill one of the thief's open slots. Beginning thieves should have no more than one nonweapon proficiency that is not among those recommended or required for their kit.

So let us suppose we have a bounty hunter named Baltrin. As a first level thief, Baltrin starts with three nonweapon proficiency slots. In addition, for choosing the Bounty Hunter kit, he gets Tracking as a bonus proficiency. Two of his three nonweapon proficiency slots must be spent on proficiencies that are recommended for his kit; he chooses alertness and riding (land-based). His final slot may be filled with any one-slot proficiency that he desires. The player chooses carpentry, deciding that Baltrin came from a family of carpenters.

A number of new nonweapon proficiencies are mentioned in these kits. See Chapter 2, "Proficiencies," for a complete listing of thief nonweapon proficiencies and complete descriptions of those which are new.

It is not recommended that you use both secondary skills and nonweapon proficiencies. We strongly recommend that you use the nonweapon proficiency rules if you are going to use these new guidelines for thief types; they give the thieves much more color and definition, and make for a more interesting and versatile campaign.

Skill Progression: This section of each thief kit suggests which of the traditional thieves' skills (picking pockets, etc.) are most valuable to that sort of thief. It is recommended that characters rise fastest in those skills, since they are the ones that are likely to get the most practice. These are meant

as suggestions—the choice of how to allot skill improvements ought to remain in the hands of the player.

Equipment: Some thief types tend to make use of certain forms of equipment, either from preference or need; or they may be limited in what equipment they can carry. We will note such situations. A Beggar, for instance, can't beg very well if he's dressed in resplendent finery, with gilded armor and bejeweled weapons.

These equipment listings aren't really restrictions. Rather, they reflect what time and trial have proven to be most advantageous for a thief of this or that variety. If the character is fulfilling his role, the equipment will make sense; and the DM is encouraged to assist in pointing out the value of the suggested equipment when a character experiments with other things.

Special Benefits: Most thief types have some special benefits that the others don't. These may be straightforward special abilities. Often, however, they reflect the thief's relationship to his society; they may be defined as special reaction bonuses, special privileges in certain cultures or regions, and so forth. A Fence, for instance, gets better reactions from other thieves (especially if they want him as a business partner), and also has less trouble than other characters in finding thieves willing to hire out their skills.

Special Hindrances: Similarly, each thief type has certain disadvantages which hinder him, such as the reaction penalties of Beggars.

Races: In the previous chapter we discussed nonhuman thieves in general. Each kit was written with the human character in mind. In a sense, demihuman thieves of each race are a kit unto themselves, because of their nonhuman heritage. However, it is certainly possible for demihumans to take one of these kits (pending the Dungeon Master's approval, of course). Before putting too much effort into a non-human character, be sure to approve the race/kit mix with your DM. He might not appreciate dwarf pirates, for instance.

Under the heading "Races", we note in each kit special considerations for nonhuman thieves: races recommended (or the opposite) for that kit, and any special modifications that might apply if a nonhuman character is used.

An Important Note

In the following sections, several thief kits include reaction bonuses and penalties as part of their special benefits and special hindrances. A word of caution needs to accompany them.

In the AD&D® game, when a character is very charismatic, he gets what is called a "reaction adjustment." (See the *Player's Handbook*, p. 18.) When the character has a high Charisma and receives a bonus, it's expressed as a plus; +2, for instance. When he has a low Charisma and receives a penalty, it's expressed as a minus; -3, for example.

However, when you roll the 2d10 for encounter reactions (see the *Dungeon Master's Guide*, p. 103), don't add the bonus (+) or subtract the penalty (-) from the die roll. Do it the other way around. If the character has a Charisma of 16, and thus gets a +5 reaction adjustment, you subtract that number from the 2d10 roll. (Otherwise the NPCs would be reacting even more badly because the character was charismatic!)

Kits and the Thief Classes

These thief kits are designed to accompany the thief class; although, as you will see, they stretch the definition of what a “thief” is. They are not appropriate for bards.

Kits and Character Creation

There are three rules governing the thief kits:

1. A character may only take one thief kit.
2. You can only take a thief kit for your character when you first create that character.

(This rule has one exception: If DM and players decide to integrate these rules with an existing campaign, and both DM and players can agree on which thief kit would be appropriate for each existing character, then you may use these rules to add a thief kit to existing characters.)

3. Once you’ve selected a thief kit, you cannot change it.

(Note, however, that with the flexible way that thieves advance, you can do a lot to make your thief look as if its kit has been changed. For instance, a Fence may be stuck in the wilderness and not be able to follow his “vocation” for years. But even so, he could not switch to a new kit, such as Scout.)

Before choosing a thief kit, you will already have determined the character’s: ability scores (AD&D *Player’s Handbook*, Chapter 1), race (Chapter 2), class (presumably thief), and alignment (Chapter 4). You might also have decided upon a host of background factors, as discussed elsewhere in this book.

You are then ready to choose your thief kit. In fleshing your character out along with the thief kit, you will probably encounter the various other stages of character creation, such as proficiencies (Chapter 5 of the *Player’s Handbook*, and Chapter 2 of this volume), money and equipment (*Player’s Handbook*, Chapter 6), and so forth.

The Thief Kits

Following are several types of thieves represented by thief kits. Before allowing his players to choose kits for their characters, the DM should review each kit and make notes for himself about them.

For each thief kit, the DM must determine:

1. If he will even allow this kit in his campaign.
2. What additional information he needs to give the players about each kit.
3. What changes he might wish to make to each kit.

Let’s take the Beggar kit as an example. In most fantasy campaigns this kit would be acceptable, at least in concept; although it is not inconceivable that one state might be so benign as to provide for all its needy—or so harsh as to keep them off the streets forcibly.

Assuming the DM says that yes, the Beggar kit will exist in his campaign, he needs to decide

which details are specific to the Beggars of his world. What causes people to be Beggars? In a predominantly lawful evil society, for example, there may be a class of people that is systematically oppressed. (This sort of society, by the way, is a perfect setting for thief player characters, whose campaign goal can be to overthrow the oppressive system.) The DM should inform the players of all these details specific to his campaign.

Finally, after the DM has decided on all the details, he should go back through the thief kits as they are presented here and adjust them as he sees fit.

Thief Kits and Thieving Skills (Optional Rules)

Because of their specializations, thieves of the various kits differ in their aptitudes for various standard thieves' skills. A Spy, for instance, would need to be better (or at least would have more practice) at detecting noise than a Fence. To reflect the predispositions of the various kits, use Table 4 for beginning thieves. This table is just like Tables 27 and 28 (Thieving Skill Racial Adjustments and Thieving Skill Dexterity Adjustments) in the *Player's Handbook*, and is cumulative with any bonuses or penalties derived from those tables.

After the adjustments have been totaled, the thief may distribute his discretionary points. There normally are 60 discretionary points to distribute (see *Player's Handbook*, p. 38). Some thief kits may not have as many discretionary points to distribute as beginning characters. The Assassin, for instance, gets only 40 points instead of 60.

Table 4: THIEVING SKILL THIEF KIT ADJUSTMENTS

Thief Kit	Ability							
	Pick Pockets ¹	Open Locks	F/R Traps ²	Move Sil.	Hide in Shadows	Detect Noise	Climb Walls	Read Lang.
Acrobat	+5%	-5%	-5%	+5%	—	—	+5%	—
Adventure	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Assassin	— ³	—	+5%	—	—	—	—	-5%
Bandit	-5%	—	+10%	— ⁴	+5%	—	-5%	-5%
Beggar	+10%	-5%	-5%	—	+5%	—	—	-5%
Bounty Hunter	— ³	—	+5%	—	—	—	-5%	—
Buccaneer	-5%	—	—	—	—	—	—	+5%
Burglar	-5%	+5%	—	—	—	—	+5%	-5%
Cutpurse	+10%	—	—	—	—	—	-5%	-5%
Fence	—	+5%	+5%	-5%	-5%	—	-5%	+5%
Investigator	-5%	—	—	—	—	+5%	—	—
Smuggler	-5%	-5%	—	+5%	+5%	+5%	-5%	—
Spy	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Swindler	—	-5%	—	—	—	—	—	5%
Thug	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Trouble-shooter	-10%	+5%	+5%	—	—	—	—	—

NOTES TO TABLE 4

1. Includes similar feats of manual dexterity, such as legerdemain and slipping poison (see also

note 3, below).

2. This ability may also be used in the placement of traps.

3. Assassins and Bounty Hunters are adept at slipping foreign substances (poison, sedative, etc.) into the food or drink of their targets. Success in such a feat of manual dexterity is determined by a pick pockets roll, and the Assassin or Bounty Hunter gets +5% on the roll. This special bonus does not apply, however, to pickpocketing or other tasks covered by this ability.

4. In the wilderness, the bandit gets +5% to this ability.

Example: Urlar is a beginning gnome thief with a Dexterity of 17. He decides to adopt the Burglar kit. Using Tables 26, 27 and 28 from the *Player's Handbook* and Table 4, above, Urlar computes his skills as shown in Table 5.

Table 5: URLAR'S SKILL ADJUSTMENTS

Skill	TOTAL				
	Base Score	Racial Adj.	Dexterity Adj.	Kit Adj.	BASE SKILL
Pick Pockets	15%	0%	+5%	-5%	15%
Open Locks	10%	+5%	+10%	+5%	30%
Find/Remove Traps	5%	+10%	0%	0%	15%
Move Silently	10%	+5%	+5%	0%	20%
Hide in Shadows	5%	+5%	+5%	0%	15%
Detect Noise	15%	+10%	0%	0%	25%
Climb Walls	60%	-15%	0%	+5%	50%
Read Languages	0%	0%	0%	-5%	-5%

Urlar now may distribute an additional 60 discretionary percentage points among the total base scores, with no more than 30 such points being assigned to any single skill, as explained in Chapter Three of the *Player's Handbook*.

Acrobat

Description: Acrobats are related to bards, as both ostensibly have the profession of entertaining others. Some would say they do this to avoid "real" work. And both characters are wont to support themselves by unorthodox means when there's a slump in their "regular" business.

Because of the physical demands of their vocation, Acrobats must have minimum scores of 12 in Strength and 14 in Dexterity.

Role: Even Acrobats who are not inclined toward larcenous behavior are rarely looked up to by the rest of their society. People who become Acrobats or actors often were born into the middle class, though their status actually becomes lower. The middle class delights most in the entertainments. The lower classes are usually too busy struggling to survive, and may be tied to their land or profession in the manner of serfs. The nobility and wealthy people are "above" the crude entertainment of the crowd; and even if they might see a circus on occasion, it would be socially impermissible to join it.

Except in unusual circumstances, then, Acrobats will come from the middle class. A player charac-

ter might be different, if a player wishes, but he will need a plausible explanation of the situation. Because of the social disgrace, it is likely that any entertainer from wealthy or noble class will be disowned.

But then, many people who seek employment as entertainers didn't leave their previous lives out of choice, anyway. A noble-born Acrobat was probably disowned (or worse) before he took up that profession, and might even have assumed a new identity. Acrobats from other backgrounds may have histories, too—things to hide, and enemies to fear. One thing they like about the circus is that nobody presumes to remove anyone else's mask or make-up.

The circus may indeed get its own history. Run by a competent swindler, a circus may make piles of money from gullible spectators. It could bring in even more by having its own Cutpurses, who are permitted to work the crowds so long as they give a percentage of their take to the circus management.

Acrobats are almost always wanderers. A small town quickly tires of its entertainers, so they must move on to the next, where their tricks and displays may be considered new and impressive.

Secondary Skills: Any.

Weapon Proficiencies: Acrobats may use any weapon normally permitted to thieves. Note, however, that they will usually avoid those that are heavy and cumbersome (see "Equipment" below).

Nonweapon Proficiencies: Required: None. Recommended: Alertness, Disguise, Fast-Talking, Juggling, Musical Instrument, Riding, Rope Use, Ventriloquism.

Skill Progression: Among the basic thieves' skills, climbing walls is the one most applicable to the Acrobat's overt profession. Their lightness of step leads to excellence in moving silently, so this skill also is likely to improve rapidly. Finally, many an Acrobat supplements his circus income by picking the pockets of the audience when he is not actually performing.

Equipment: In order to make use of their Acrobatic skills, Acrobats favor the least and lightest equipment possible. If the optional encumbrance rules (*Player's Handbook*, pp. 76-79) are used, Acrobats should not be permitted more than light encumbrance. Acrobats may encumber themselves more in special situations (e.g., carrying a wounded comrade to safety, hauling a great hoard of treasure), but they will invariably seek to divest themselves of the excess weight at the first opportunity.

Special Benefits: The abilities of jumping, tumbling, and tightrope walking are so crucial to this kit that the Acrobat should be able to have them as special abilities even if the DM has chosen not to use the nonweapon proficiency system. Further, because of their intense training with these skills, Acrobats should get a bonus of +1 whenever a proficiency check is required. This bonus is +2 if the Acrobat is wearing no armor (and, under the optional encumbrance rules, is unencumbered).

Special Hindrances: None.

Races: The shorter races—halflings, gnomes, and particularly dwarves—often have difficulty with Acrobatic feats, on account of their body size and build. Dwarves, in addition, rarely have a temperament that would endear them to a circus show; though one can easily imagine cheerful halflings and mischievous gnomes entertaining a crowd.

Dwarf characters, then, ought not to take this kit. Halflings and gnomes may, if they so desire, but they do not gain the bonuses listed under "Special Benefits" for jumping and tightrope walking. (They do receive the tumbling bonus.)

Adventurer

Description: The Adventurer is the jack-of-all-trades, the prototypical dungeon-delving thief. The Adventurer is not so much a thief as a character who takes advantage of the general thievery skills

on professional adventures into dungeon and wilderness. The Adventurer thief kit has no requirements beyond those of the thief class itself.

Role: Adventurer-kit thieves usually serve in parties of brave adventurers of various classes. Their special skills are vital in supporting any successful expedition into wilderness or dungeon. The professional Adventurer is, furthermore, preferred by many adventuring parties, because he is much less likely than other thieves to betray or steal from his own companions. The successful Adventurer knows the value of trust and cooperation, while many a “street thief” has been raised on duplicity and (sometimes literal) backstabbing.

Many Adventurers are neutral or lawful. Few are evil, and almost none that are chaotic evil can survive for long, let alone prosper in his ways.

Adventurers may be part of a thieves’ guild for easy access to equipment and training. They tend to be independent, however, and dislike guilds that have demands beyond a simple membership fee.

Secondary Skills: Any.

Weapon Proficiencies: Any.

Nonweapon Proficiencies: Required: None. Recommended: Player’s choice; among those that may be selected are Alertness, Boating, Fast-talking, Gather Intelligence, and Looting.

Skill Progression: Adventurer thieves tend to spread their skill improvements as evenly as possible, to allow them to deal with the many different challenges the adventuring life presents. If there is any concentration, it is usually on opening locks or finding and removing traps, since these skills are probably used most often.

Equipment: Adventurers are typically very gadget-oriented, delighting in new ways to bypass monsters and raid their lairs. They also may have a good bit of money, from successful ventures, to reinvest in equipment.

Special Benefits: None.

Special Hindrances: None.

Races: Any.

Assassin

Description: In any reasonably corrupt culture, there are those who wish to eliminate someone whose very existence stands in the way of their plans. To serve them there are Assassins: trained killers whose services are for hire.

In the AD&D® 2nd Edition *Players’ Handbook*, the idea of an assassin, a hired killer, has been divorced from any particular character class. Indeed, a character can be any class and still be an assassin; this thief kit simply shows how a thief can be converted into an efficient, discreet killer. Characters of other classes still can (and often will) be assassins, so it would be best not to let down one’s guard . . .

Assassins must have the following minimum ability scores: Strength 12, Dexterity 12, and Intelligence 11.

Role: Thugs and Bounty Hunters may be seen as close relatives of the Assassin. It is important, then, to understand their differences, and what makes their roles distinct. Thugs typically serve as crude muscle, using bullying and intimidation. The Assassin, on the other hand, thrives on anonymity, on surprise—on his victim not even realizing that he is a target until it is much too late. A clever Assassin might never be seen by his victim. Here, too, the Assassin differs from the Bounty Hunter, for the hunter often seeks his quarry alive, and typically must bring back his prey (or the corpse thereof) as proof of his project’s success.

Most Assassins are of evil alignment. However, it is conceivable that one might be of a neutral (but

not good) alignment. Player-character Assassins, if they are permitted in the campaign, best fit this rare neutral description. A PC might be the agent of some monarch, paid to arrange the discreet demise of those who threaten the kingdom's safety. While this certainly is not good (in the moral sense), the character might regard it as a justifiable evil because of the deaths the action prevents by obstructing rebellion, invasion, or whatever.

Many Assassin thieves belong to guilds. The guilds use them to serve their own needs, and act as an intermediary for outsiders who wish to take out a contract on someone's life.

Secondary Skills: Any.

Weapon Proficiencies: Because of their specialization in the art of killing, Assassins, unlike thieves of other kits, are permitted the use of any weapon. An Assassin often selects one favored weapon, such as a garotte or serrated dagger (or even something exotic, such as blowgun darts with an exotic insect poison from a distant jungle), to use for his killings. If the Assassin achieves infamy, the marks of this weapon may become known as a sort of "calling card."

Nonweapon Proficiencies: Required: Trailing, Disguise. Recommended: Alertness, Begging, Gather Intelligence, Herbalism, Land-Based Riding, Observation, Tracking, Voice Mimicry.

Skill Progression: Assassins favor the skills of move silently, hide in shadows, detect noise and climb walls. They also make occasional use of the pick pockets skill—not for lifting purses, but for similarly delicate tasks, such as slipping poison unnoticed into a target's goblet of wine.

Equipment: Assassins are familiar with and make frequent use of a wide array of deadly devices. See Chapter 5 (page 90) for details on all sorts of special items, such as blade boots, death knives, folding bows, and so forth. Equipment to help their preferred skills (see "Skill Progression" above), such as clawed shoes and gloves and camouflaged clothing, is also popular.

If the DM permits, poison is also available and frequently used by the Assassin. The Assassin may purchase poison (expensive and usually illegal), or attempt to manufacture or extract it himself (which can be dangerous as well; see the special section on poison in Chapter 7 for more information).

Special Benefits: Because of their training and experience with the use of poisons, Assassins also can identify poisons used by others. The base chance of doing so is the Assassin's level multiplied by 5%.

Assassins with intelligence of 13-15 get a +5% bonus on the attempt; 16-17, a +10% bonus; and 18, +15%. Further adjustments depend on how the Assassin attempts the identification: sight, smell, taste, or symptoms.

Sight means examination of the poison or poisoned article. Many poisons have a distinctive appearance, or they may have a corrosive or discoloring effect on metals, foods, etc. Identification by sight has a -20% modifier. Its advantage is that the Assassin needn't worry about poisoning himself in the process.

A poison may also be identified by its odor. This carries a -15% penalty. Furthermore, if it is an ingested or contact poison, there is a 10% chance that the Assassin will be affected by the poison, though at half strength (i.e., no effect if the saving throw is successful, and if it's not, normal save damage is applied—see the *Dungeon Master's Guide*, p. 73).

Taste is a fairly reliable, if dangerous, method of identifying a poison. It carries a -5% penalty. After dabbing a tiny bit on his tongue, the Assassin spits it out. There is still a chance that the poison will affect the Assassin: 25% for injected poison, 75% for ingested, and 100% for contact. The poison's effects, if any, are half strength (see above).

The most certain way of identifying a poison is by its symptom (no penalty on the attempt). The drawback of this method is of course that you need a poisoned character to examine.

An Assassin with herbalism proficiency gets a +5% identification bonus because of his knowledge

of toxins extracted from plants. An Assassin with healing proficiency gets a +10% bonus in any case. These bonuses are not cumulative.

An attempt to identify a poison takes one round; be sure to keep track of time elapsed and the onset time of the poison. If one method of identification fails, the next may be tried. If none of the four produce an answer then the poison will remain a mystery to that Assassin. (The Assassin could attempt identification again after he's gained an experience level, but this is not normally of any help.)

Identification of a poison also means knowledge of its antidote (if one exists); it does not mean that the antidote is available, however. An Assassin with herbalism proficiency may attempt to make an antidote from scratch (see special rules, p. 113).

Special Hindrances: Because of the time they spend on weapons and poisons, Assassins advance more slowly in thieves' skills than thieves of other kits. They start with only 40 discretionary points to allocate at 1st level, and with each level gained they receive only 20 points to distribute among the skills.

Assassins are generally feared and shunned. Therefore an Assassin suffers a -4 reaction penalty with non-evil NPCs who are aware of his profession.

Races: In theory, any race could have Assassins. The DM may wish to forbid elven, gnome and halfling Assassins, however, since this profession is quite antithetical to their cultures.

Bandit

Description: Travel is rarely a safe affair in the medieval fantasy setting, whether one traverses the forbidding wilderness or the pastoral countryside. Beside the dangers of nature and fantastic menaces, such as dragons and giants, there are humans who prey on their journeying kin. Almost every stretch of road near civilization is claimed by one or more bands of highwaymen, and even the far wilderness may hide the strongholds of robbers.

Bandits must be strong and hardy to withstand the harsh forces of nature, the people who seek their destruction, and even each other. Thieves must have minimum scores of 10, then, in both Strength and Constitution to be eligible for the Bandit kit.

Role: Bandits are often vicious characters, desperate, cunning, and cruel. They are prone to fight or even betray each other, but two things keep them bound in groups: the utter necessity of cooperation in order to survive the perils of the wilderness (let alone to be successful robbers), and the strength of whoever has established himself as leader among them by force and cunning.

Some leaders manage to weld together very large groups of Bandits. In some AD&D® worlds, such as the WORLD OF GREYHAWK® Fantasy Setting, there are even kingdoms of Bandits. Such things are rare, however, since few leaders have the Strength or Charisma to bind many of these thieves; or even if they do, the mob will rarely stay together beyond the leader's demise.

Bandits do not belong to guilds, as such. A large group of them, or a network of cooperating groups, may be considered analogous to a guild, however—providing some training, intimidating nonmembers who operate in their "territory" (including humanoids and the like), and so forth. A few Bandit groups may actually have connections to a big city guild, though such ties would probably be very loose (perhaps occasional cooperation, rather than subservience).

Bandits rarely have pleasant reasons for pursuing their lifestyles. Most have a history better left behind, and many have a price (or three) on their heads in some place or another. The average Bandit would be better off outside the wilderness, but with enemies and authorities elsewhere, it is the closest available thing to a sanctuary.

Bandits can expect less than mercy at the hands of the law. As if Banditry itself wasn't punishable,

most of these thieves already have a few major crimes under their belt. But, like a city guild, Bandits can work out arrangements with local military and civilian authorities. In exchange for bribes and a cut of the take, Bandits may garner information on rich targets and how best to avoid the punitive expeditions that may periodically be sent against them.

Secondary Skills: Bowyer/Fletcher, Farmer, Fisher, Forester, Gambler, Groom, Hunter, Leather worker, Tailor/Weaver, Teamster/Freighter, Trader/Barterer, Trapper/Furrier, Weaponsmith, Woodworker/Carpenter.

Skill Progression: The skills favored by Bandits are those useful for scouting and preparing ambushes—specifically, climb walls (for tree-climbing), move silently, and hide in shadows. Find/remove traps also tends to develop with a Bandit's knowledge of snares, pits and so forth, which may be employed on occasion to waylay travelers.

Weapon Proficiencies: Bandits are particularly partial to heavy, brutal, bludgeoning weapons. For this reason they may use the following cudgel-like weapons in addition to those normally permitted to thieves: flail, mace, morning star and warhammer. At least one of the Bandit's initial weapon proficiency slots must be filled by a bludgeoning weapon. Bandits must also take proficiency in the knife. They not only use this for fighting (some among them regard knife-fighting as a spectator sport), but as practical equipment for wilderness survival. Since this fills the two weapon proficiencies open to a thief, the Bandit is granted a third initial weapon proficiency slot, to fill with the weapon of his choice (from among those permitted to thieves).

Nonweapon Proficiencies: Required: Survival (choose appropriate terrain). Recommended: Alertness, Animal Handling/Training, Animal Noise, Fire-building, Intimidation, Looting, Riding, Rope Use, Set Snares, Swimming.

Equipment: A Bandit should be well-equipped for wilderness survival. Vital items include provisions, backpack and pouches, flint and steel (which are more reliable than a magnifying glass for starting fires—especially at night!), tinder, a blanket, and a knife.

Less vital, but often of use, are climbing equipment (crampons, pitons, etc.), fishing gear (hooks, line, net), light sources (candle, lantern, torch), rope, sewing needle and thread, sacks for loot, a signal whistle, spyglass, small tent, thieves' picks, and a whetstone (so you can sharpen your knife when there's nothing else to do).

Some Bandits, finally, like to have trained animals (dogs, falcons, pigeons) for hunting or message-carrying. To make effective use of such an animal, animal handling proficiency is needed.

Special Benefits: Because of their adeptness at ambushing, Bandits gain +1 on their attempt to surprise in a wilderness setting.

Special Hindrances: Bandits are generally despised by other characters: Normal people hate and fear highwaymen, and other types of thieves tend to look at them with scorn, as outcasts and crude robbers. For this reason, any Bandit who is recognized as such suffers a -2 reaction penalty among non-Bandit NPCs.

Races: Bandits are a motley group, and any race may be found among them—even races with a tradition of antipathy, although such characters are likely to fight each other as much as the band's targets. Humanoid and part-humanoid characters in particular favor the Bandit kit. Demihuman characters who join Bandit groups with other races are probably outcasts from among their own people.

Beggar

Description: Circumstances have reduced some unfortunates to such a level of poverty and helplessness that the only possible way that they can survive is by imploring their fellow beings to

give them whatever meager scraps can be spared. At least, so the Beggar would wish it to appear.

For a great many Beggars this is the truth; misfortune or disability have dealt them sore blows, and they must rely on the charity of individuals and a few institutions, such as beneficent churches, for subsistence.

But there is another class of Beggar, which is really a particularly insidious variety of swindler or con artist. This character is usually perfectly able-bodied, but has taken up begging as a career, supplemented by minor theft (pickpocketing and the like) and the gathering and selling of information to interested parties. It is with this sort of Beggar that this kit is chiefly concerned.

The Beggar has no requirements beyond those of the thief class.

Role: Thieves of this kit, professional Beggars, were usually raised into their role. This of course means a lower (indeed, lowest in many places!) class background, and meager financial resources at best. The Beggar has other resources, however: connections, street smarts, a sharp eye, and diverse skills for cajoling passers-by out of their spare cash.

Effective begging requires consummate skills of acting and disguise, so that the Beggar can present himself in the manner most likely to garner the sympathy and cash of the people he accosts.

As a matter of survival, the Beggar needs diverse sources of income. Few can avoid starvation solely by the charity of strangers in the street. They are also dealers in gossip and information (such as the movement and activities of wealthy personages), with ears ever open for any tidbit of knowledge that may help fill their stomachs with food. Beggars will also gladly hire themselves out as messengers or spies.

Beggars also are known to cooperate with other varieties of thieves, especially Cutpurses. A favorite ruse is for one or more Beggars to accost a wealthy-looking person. While they distract him with their pitiful (and more often than not, futile) pleas for assistance, a slick Cutpurse relieves the victim of his purse. Shares of the score are divided among Beggars and Cutpurse.

Many Beggars are affiliates of the local thieves' guild, surprisingly enough. The guild makes use of them as messengers and informants. It also may have a sort of protection racket going with them: Beggars must share their score with the local guild in exchange for protection from thieves of the guild itself, as well as "freelancers" and rival guildsmen. Guild-affiliated Beggars also may gain some measure of protection from the local constabulary—a useful thing if local law prohibits pan-handling.

Secondary Skills: Usually (90%) none; begging itself is assumed to have been the character's trade or profession. If a Beggar does have any secondary skills, it should be assumed that for some reason or other he lost his means of employment. He may have been thrown out of his trade guild, for instance; or could have been maimed so that he could no longer perform tasks as he did in the past.

Weapon Proficiencies: Beggars begin with familiarity only with simple, inexpensive weapons. The knife is a favorite, being inexpensive, easy to use, and easy to conceal. Beginning thieves with the Beggar kit should select their two proficient weapons from among the following: club, dagger, dart, knife, sling, or staff.

Nonweapon Proficiencies: Required: Begging, Disguise, Information Gathering, Observation. Recommended: Alertness, Singing, Trailing. As mentioned under Secondary Skills, above, a Beggar with marketable skills (e.g., crafts or trades) should have some reason in his background why he is no longer able to support himself through them.

Skill Progression: Beggars become most proficient in picking pockets (to supplement begging income), and moving silently, hiding in shadows, and detecting noise (useful for gathering information and tailing people). They tend to be worst at opening locks and finding or removing traps, since these skills require technical training that is not easily available.

Equipment: The basic equipment of a Beggar is a wooden bowl or cup in which passers-by may

place alms. More sophisticated Beggars have false crutches, make-up and the like to make themselves seem as desperate and poverty-stricken as possible.

Some Beggars have children with them (rented from the true parents, or borrowed in return for a share of the day's income, if they are not the Beggar's own) to arouse still more sympathy.

A more sophisticated sort of Beggar offers a service of some kind—singing a song, or playing a simple instrument—in exchange for food, drink, or a few coins.

Few Beggars can afford to purchase armor; and even if they could, they would not want to wear it, since it would suggest that they are wealthier than they would like to appear.

Beggars who rise above their circumstances may of course equip themselves as they see fit, although then they will no longer be accepted by other Beggars as one of their kind. A Beggar who appears well-off could suffer penalties, at the DM's discretion, at the following proficiencies: begging (because the character doesn't look impoverished), information gathering (because other Beggars will distrust him), and even trailing (because the thief might not blend in as well with the city's masses).

Special Benefits: The most valuable benefits of the Beggar kit are the large number of bonus nonweapon proficiencies. These should be granted to a character even if the campaign at large does not make use of nonweapon proficiency rules.

Special Hindrances: Beggars are scorned by most of society. Even characters who share their wealth with Beggars tend to feel a sort of disgust or condescension, though they may try to hide it. Other thieves, however, recognize the talents and value of Beggars. For this reason, Beggars suffer -2 on reaction rolls with NPCs who aren't thieves.

Furthermore, because of their impoverished background, Beggars start the game with only 3d4 gold pieces.

Races: Beggars may be of any race. In regions with a lot of bigotry, where demihumans have difficulty finding legitimate employment, Beggars are commonly demihuman. Most nonhuman Beggars were forced into their position by unfortunate circumstances—they were not born into it.

Bounty Hunter

Description: The Bounty Hunter is a ruthless mercenary, worshipping little besides the price on his target's head, recognizing few laws save the contractual distinction between "kill" and "capture." He may be found serving the state, capturing criminals and bringing them to justice; or he may serve the shadowy lords of the underworld, avenging the twisted honor found among thieves and criminals. Pursuit of his quarry may take him through a thousand hostile environments, to foreign lands, even to alien planes. He is a hunter of men.

The Bounty Hunter's vocation is rigorous and demanding at every level: physical, psychological, even moral. It requires a sure hand and a stable mind. To be a Bounty Hunter, a thief must have minimum scores of 11 in every ability except Charisma. One thing that doesn't really matter to a tough, independent thief like this is whether or not people like him.

A further requirement is that the Bounty Hunter be of a non-lawful alignment. The reasons for this are discussed below.

Role: It is important to draw a distinction between the Bounty Hunter and the Assassin, for their vocations are similar.

The Assassin is most often part of a larger network or organization—either a society of Assassins for hire, or a guild or crime family, or even a government. The Assassin is retained by that organization to discreetly eliminate its enemies; he is strictly a killer. The Assassin also is a predominantly urban figure, though his missions may take him out of that setting on occasion. Most organizations

that have Assassins would deny their existence, because of the highly illegal and unpopular nature of their activities.

The Bounty Hunter, by contrast, is a loner. He may be solicited directly by an employer, but more often he simply learns of a price offered for the body (living or dead) of some person and goes after him.

While the Assassin requires secrecy and anonymity, the Bounty Hunter thrives on infamy. Fear leads his prey to make mistakes, and each such mistake brings the Bounty Hunter one step closer to success. While an Assassin is often hired to kill relatively normal, often unsuspecting people, the Bounty Hunter is tracking fugitives—people who know who's after them, and are therefore exceptionally desperate and dangerous.

Pursuit of such people may lead the Bounty Hunter to literally any place, even to other planes of existence (if the prospective reward will make the venture worthwhile), and so the Bounty Hunter becomes adept at survival and tracking in all manner of hostile environments.

Bounty Hunters do not track only fugitives. They may be hired to perform such tasks as kidnapping, freeing kidnapped persons, or (especially at lower levels, when they are still developing their skills) recovering stolen property.

The law and authorities do not always look kindly upon Bounty Hunters, though they will permit their existence so that they, too, may benefit from the manhunters' expertise. For the same reason, thieves' guilds tolerate the Bounty Hunters, despite the fact that almost no Hunter would ever join their ranks.

Secondary Skills: Any.

Weapon Proficiencies: The Bounty Hunter is permitted the use of any weapon. As part of his persona and fearsome public image, a Bounty Hunter will often gain proficiency in a rare or bizarre weapon, such as the khopesh sword or man-catcher. Non-thief weapons take up two of the Bounty Hunter's weapon proficiency slots, but he is granted a bonus slot at 1st level.

Example: Borg Tartan takes the Bounty Hunter thief kit. This means he has 3 initial weapon proficiency slots. Two he fills with a nonthief weapon, two-handed sword, and in the third he takes the hand crossbow.

Nonweapon Proficiencies: Required: Tracking. Recommended: Alertness, Animal Handling/Training, Animal Noise, Boating, Direction Sense, Fire-building, Gather Intelligence, Herbalism, Hunting, Intimidation, Observation, Riding, Set Snares, Survival, Trailing.

Skill Progression: Bounty Hunters make frequent use of almost all thief skills, except perhaps pick pockets.

Note that "pick pockets" includes all sorts of delicate feats of manual dexterity, such as slipping poison or a "mickey" into a drink. Deadly poisoning is more frequently the province of the Assassin, but a carefully placed, powerful sedative may save a Bounty Hunter a great deal of trouble. (To have access to sedatives or understand their use, a Bounty Hunter must have herbalism proficiency.)

Equipment: Besides the usual range of thiefling equipment, Bounty Hunters take interest in items for killing and capturing their prey. Special items from the equipment chapter, such as blade boots, death knives, folding bows, and the like, are sometimes taken as favorite weapons. A rope for holding live prisoners is, of course, vital, and it may also be used for setting snares. Blinding powder and incapacitating poisons (paralytic ones or those that make their victim ill and helpless) may also have value.

Bounty Hunters make little use of deadly poisons—that is more the province of the stealthy Assassin. If a Bounty Hunter is out to kill a fugitive, he probably won't be worrying about how messy it will be.

Special Benefits: None.

Special Hindrances: None.

Races: Members of any race could become Bounty Hunters. Among the nonhumans, however, those of mixed blood (e.g., half-elves) favor it most, since they are often outsiders, loners not accepted by either side of their ancestry.

Buccaneer

Description: Buccaneers are thieves of the high seas, plying the trade lanes in search of prey. They intermix with and complement their piratical warrior cousins...to the extent that any of these scoundrels can be said to complement anything.

A hardy Constitution (no less than 10) is required to survive long months at sea and be a Buccaneer.

Role: Buccaneers closely resemble their land-dwelling cousins, Bandits. They, too, are desperate and cruel, fiendishly cunning, and likely to have a lot of internal squabbles.

Like Bandits, Buccaneers cooperate for survival and success. They also have sordid pasts—pasts which will often bind them together. Many a pirate ship used to be put to legitimate use, but its crew rose in mutiny, took the ship, killed everyone not party to the act, and turned to piracy.

Mutiny and piracy are both punishable by death, and on the high seas the warship or merchantman of any state will gladly carry out that sentence, if given a chance. Buccaneers will therefore fight to the death, against all odds, rather than face capture and inevitable summary execution.

Buccaneers do not belong to guilds; although, like Bandits, a ship of them may be considered a nonstandard guild of sorts. Sometimes groups of pirate and Buccaneer ships will even make alliances, and cooperate to raid richly-laden (and therefore well-defended) merchantmen. There may also be rivalry among pirate groups—especially when one of them carries a healthy cargo of booty that has not yet been hidden in a safe sanctuary.

Buccaneers like to have secret sanctuaries, probably in a secret cove or on a tiny island. There they rest between raids, store treasure and provisions, and plan their activities. Such sanctuaries will have the best protection available to the Buccaneers, possibly including magical defenses.

Related to but distinct from Buccaneers are Privateers. These are “legitimate” Buccaneers. Privateers have received the sanction of some nation to practice piracy on the merchantmen of another nation. Well known historical examples of this include the Privateers of Elizabethan England, captained by such illustrious personages as Sir Francis Drake. These daring “sea dogs” raided gold-laden Spanish galleons as they returned from the New World.

While Privateers are sanctioned by one nation, those on whom they prey certainly regard them as pirates and will treat them as such if they are captured.

A group of NPC Buccaneers should include not just thieves but a healthy number of warriors with the pirate kit, and perhaps a swashbuckler or two as well. Even a renegade mage might be found among them. (Privateers are even more likely to have the services of a wizard, especially one with talents in the manipulation of water and wind.)

Secondary Skills: Gambler, Limner/Painter, Navigator, Sailor, Shipwright, Tailor/Weaver, Teamster/Freighter, Trader/Barterer, Woodworker/Carpenter.

Skill Progression: Buccaneers make much less use of the traditional thief skills than thieves of other kits. Climbing around the rigging of their ships requires some wall-climbing skill, and the delicate step needed to work high above the deck may carry over into excellence at moving silently. Finally, Buccaneers favor the read languages skill—they like to be extraordinarily adept at deciphering the strange, secret codes adorning maps, codes that may tell a sly captain the location of a rival’s buried treasure.

Weapon Proficiencies: The DM may wish to make classic Buccaneer weapons, such as the cutlass, available to thieves of this kit.

Nonweapon Proficiencies: Required: Navigation, Seamanship, Swimming. Recommended: Alertness, Direction Sense, Fishing, Gambling, Intimidation, Looting, Rope Use, Tightrope Walking, Weather Sense.

Equipment: Buccaneers dress themselves as sailors (with weapons, of course), and carry about the same equipment when at sea. Also, like sailors, they will avoid armor—it gets in the way of climbing around the rigging (double penalties on climbing rolls), and also presents a problem for someone unfortunate enough to find himself overboard.

Special Benefits: Because of their familiarity with ropes, much used in the nautical arts, Buccaneers gain a bonus of +5% on climbing rolls if ropes are involved—+10% if they are ropes on a ship. (Note that the total chance of success with a thief skill, including all positive and negative modifiers, cannot exceed 95%.)

Always be sure to consider the various climbing modifiers, explained on pp. 122-123 of the *Player's Handbook*.

Buccaneers also can fight from a rope (usually on a ship), so long as the feet and one hand can grasp it, and they are much better at this than other types of characters. They get +1 on attack and saving throw rolls in rope combat, +2 on such rolls in shipboard rope combat. Note that these adjustments should be added to all the other modifiers—which are usually negative. For instance, a climbing character would normally get a -2 penalty on attacks; so the Buccaneer's +2 bonus merely negates this.

Use common sense when applying the saving throw bonus for a Buccaneer in rope combat; while it would apply to dodging a lightning bolt, it would not apply to saving against a charm or hold spell.

For more information on shipboard combat, see “Learning the Ropes” below.

Special Hindrances: As their expertise lies in rope-climbing, Buccaneers suffer a penalty of -10% when they attempt to climb without one.

Races: Almost all Buccaneers are human, since few demihumans and humanoids are known as seafarers. The occasional half-elf might be found among a Buccaneer crew, or, even more rarely, a half-breed or full-blooded aquatic elf. For such an elf to leave his own people would indicate a turbulent past indeed.

Learning the Ropes **(Optional Rules)**

Buccaneers often find themselves fighting among the ropes and masts of their ships. This section of optional rules is intended to help simulate the difficulty and excitement of such a scenario. It may also be used in other situations of rope combat.

The basic modifiers in climbing combat are as follows:

- * A climbing character loses all Armor Class bonuses for Dexterity and shield.
- * A climbing character suffers a -2 penalty on attack, damage, and saving throw rolls.
- * A character attacking from above gains a +2 bonus on his attack roll.
- * A character attacking from below suffers a -2 penalty on his attack roll.

Other modifiers that often come into play are:

* An off-balance defender is attacked with a bonus of +2. See below for more information on balance and rope combat.

* A rear attack (e.g., against a character trying to climb up a rope—but NOT a Buccaneer climbing and dodging at the same time, as explained below) gains a +2 bonus.

Buccaneers additionally gain a +1 on rope combat attacks (+2 if shipboard), and may be given the option of dodging (explained below), thanks to their facility and frequent practice with rope climbing.

NPC sailors, also familiar with seaborne rope climbing, should, for the purpose of these rules, have a base climbing percentage of 65%. This percentage does NOT apply to other sorts of climbing (walls, mountains, etc.); in such areas a sailor is assumed to be untrained and should be treated as such.

Remember that modifiers are cumulative!

Losing and Regaining Balance

Any character engaged in combat on ropes runs the risk of losing his balance.

A character who is struck by a weapon, or attempts to climb in the course of combat, must make a climbing check or lose his balance.

Lost balance means that the next round the character must either fall voluntarily or attempt to regain his balance. In either case, the character can perform no other action. A successful climbing check means that the character has regained his balance. A failure means the character has fallen (and, of course, may suffer falling damage). Don't forget, all attacks against an off-balance character are at +2.

Optional Rule: Dodging

Thieves with the Buccaneer kit may choose to spend a round in rope combat dodging. When doing so, the thief may not attack, but he may move at half his normal rope-climbing speed. If a successful climbing check is made, the Buccaneer is able to add his Dexterity bonus to his Armor Class for that round of combat. If unsuccessful, the thief will be off-balance the next round; he must spend it regaining his balance (see below), and attacks against him are at +2.

Example: While plying the sea lanes, a ship carrying the Buccaneer Daljo assaults a merchantman whose crew refuses the Buccaneers' demand for their cargo and puts up a surprising amount of resistance. Daljo and his men board the vessel, and he finds himself fighting high above the deck, facing an ugly sailor armed with a long, curved dagger. Daljo himself wields a cutlass. Neither combatant is wearing armor.

The modifiers for this melee are as follows: Neither gets a Dexterity bonus; since they are both unarmored, they both have AC 10. The sailor's attack modifiers are -2 for climbing, but +2 for attacking from above, so they balance out to zero. Daljo has -2 for climbing, +3 for being a Buccaneer climbing ropes on a ship, and -2 for attacking from below, for a total penalty of -1.

In one round of combat, suppose Daljo is struck by the sailor's knife. He must roll his climbing percentage to avoid losing his balance. His base percentage is 75%; but thanks to his kit and the situation he gets a +10% bonus. If an 85 or lower is rolled, Daljo hangs on in spite of the situation.

But suppose he is unsuccessful: Daljo has lost his balance. The next round his action is to attempt to regain it (the only alternative is to drop to the deck), which he succeeds in doing, while the sailor strikes with a +2 bonus. If Daljo is struck again, he will have to make another climbing check lest he lose another round of attacks or even plummet to the deck below.

If the combat continues to go poorly, Daljo should probably dodge blows while retreating down the rope. The sailor has the advantage when above him, but once Daljo has returned safely to the deck, he can fight on an even footing again. If the sailor does not follow him down, however, he should not go too far—lest the sailor try to cut the rope above him!

Burglar

Description: The consummate Burglar is an expert at breaking and entering the most difficult buildings, bypassing walls, locks, traps and guardians, grabbing the best loot, and escaping unnoticed as stealthily as he arrived.

The cat Burglar requires a minimum Strength of 10 and Dexterity of 13.

Role: In many ways, the cat Burglar is the stereotypical professional thief. He probably uses more of the traditional thief skills, and more frequently, than any other kit.

Even within the ranks of Burglars, thieves often specialize even further. Some specialize by skills. A “box-man,” for instance, is an expert at opening locks, especially safes and well-protected chests. A cat Burglar or second-story thief specializes in climbing walls (which can be a remarkably effective protection, especially if ground-level entrances have people around them). Teams of Burglars who specialize by skill often find the most success.

Other Burglars specialize by target. Jewel thieves in particular are the elite among Burglars; the protection found around the objects of their attention demands that their skills and cleverness be honed to perfection.

Burglars of any background may be found. Even thrillseekers of the privileged classes may take up jewel Burglary as a challenging, profitable, and exciting pastime.

Almost all successful Burglars have some sort of guild affiliation. In order to get rid of the loot they take, they of course need a fence (especially if their score is distinctive—e.g., fabulous gems, valuable artwork). Guilds provide the Burglar with innumerable benefits: fencing of even the most distinctive items, connections with potential “business” partners, access to specialized equipment, and, not least of all, protection. A guild can arrange the fix (to free an imprisoned Burglar), and provide deterrence, protecting its Burglars from other guilds and powerful criminals—people who don’t take kindly to being robbed themselves, and are more likely to make hasty decisions about a suspect character’s guilt or innocence.

Secondary Skills: Any.

Weapon Proficiencies: Better Burglars do not bring weapons with them on a job; it only means more serious penalties if they are caught—either legal penalties, or more immediate ones like a jumpy victim panicking and attacking them. On some jobs, however (e.g., stealing from dangerous criminals) a Burglar is wise to have means of self-defense. Small, quiet, concealable weapons are naturally favored, though a Burglar may choose proficiency in any weapon among those normally permitted to thieves.

Nonweapon Proficiencies: Required: Alertness, Looting. Recommended: Begging, Gather Intelligence, Jumping, Observation, Rope Use, Tightrope Walking, Tumbling.

Skill Progression: The vital skills of a Burglar are open locks, find/remove traps, move silently, hide in shadows, detect noise and climb walls. As mentioned before, a Burglar may concentrate particularly on one of these, but he would probably then want to be as evenly excellent as possible in the others.

Equipment: Burglars love to use specialized hardware to increase their chances of success. For a thorough examination of some specialty items available, and their effects on thief skills, consult the equipment chapter later in this book.

Special Benefits: None.

Special Hindrances: None.

Races: Members of any race may be Burglars, and it is a favorite kit. Non-human thieves often specialize in areas that offer excellent racial bonuses. For instance, dwarves may specialize in

lockpicking and trap detection. And elves may specialize in reconnaissance (they sneak around and report on the presence and nature of obstacles).

The Specialist Burglar

A broad, general range of skills is often what adventurers choose, but for the urban Burglar, specialization is the way to go. There are a number of reasons for this.

A specialized thief is simply more marketable. People in the underworld want someone excellent for a job. That may mean a high-level generalized thief, one who has been in the business long enough to be good at everything. But it's not easy for a thief to reach that level. Therefore, by concentrating on one skill, a relatively low-level thief may compete with a thief many levels higher for jobs of a certain type.

Suppose, for instance, we have a “box-man”—actually a woman—named Annelise. By concentrating as many points as possible in her open locks skill, she can have a score of 85% at only 4th level (this does not include modifiers for race, Dexterity, armor or kit). Since she can put no more than half of what she earns at each level into any one skill, she distributes her remaining points more or less evenly among the other skills. She would probably neglect pick pockets and read languages, however, since they usually are not useful to a Burglar.

Compare this to a “generalist” thief, which adventurers tend to be: On Table 19 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide* (Thief Average Ability Table), you can see that Annelise's level of lockpicking skill would not be attained before 14th level.

Now imagine that a mob of jewel thieves is preparing for a job. They have diverse skills—except that they are lousy at lock-picking. They need to bring a box-man into their mob. Who would they choose? Well, first off, a 14th-level thief is pretty bloody rare.

And even if one were available and willing to work with less-experienced thieves, he would probably demand a larger share of the take. Otherwise it would not be worth his time: He has uniformly good skills, and could probably commit this robbery on his own. A job with which he would need assistance is probably well out of the range of these thieves.

Annelise, then, is a pretty attractive option. She might be able to climb little better than a fish, but that's the cat Burglar's expertise; after he's mounted the building, he can lower a rope for the less sure-footed. By offering Annelise a reasonable share of the loot, the other Burglars are almost assured that their difficult lock will be opened.

Cutpurse

Description: This is probably the most common sort of thief—the pickpocket or shoplifter who engages in small-time larceny, usually at a level of meager subsistence. He often supplements his income by working as an informant for the powerful figures of the underworld (or anyone else who's willing to pay).

The Cutpurse has no requirements beyond those of the thief class.

Role: The Cutpurse is near the bottom of the underworld hierarchy. His activities are not as risky as those of other thieves, but they are not as profitable either.

Many Cutpurses are “freelancers,” not associated with any thieves' guild. Guilds, normally harsh on non-member thieves who operate in their territory, pay little attention to Cutpurses. The profit and benefits that would accrue from their membership would not outweigh the trouble of trying to bring them into line. For this reason many chaotic thieves, who may dislike the structure and limitations of guild membership, choose the Cutpurse kit.

Cutpurses are not always uncooperative, however. Some do join guilds, which they serve primarily as informants and tipsters, ears on the streets, catching gossip and scoping out prospective targets that can then be assigned to other thieves.

Cutpurses who don't belong to a guild often form their own little mob. Such a small mob usually develops a standard *modus operandi* (way of operating), and they use the same scam on every target. They may also design special, elaborate plans for lifting a particularly heavy purse. Cutpurses also may enlist the assistance of thieves of other kits in their operations (see the Beggar kit, above, for an example).

Suppose, for instance, that one thief has the job of accosting an affluent-looking stranger, whom the Cutpurses have guessed to be an out-of-town merchant. This first thief presents himself as a street-vendor. While he tries to sell the merchant a hot pastry, a second thief comes by carrying a large load (perhaps a basket full of dirty sheets), which he "accidentally" drops on or around the merchant. In the chaos that ensues, the first two thieves appear to help the merchant, picking up the fallen items and apologizing profusely; while a third Cutpurse does the actual job of relieving the merchant of his cash.

Like beggars, most Cutpurses are of lower-class background and are born into their station.

Secondary Skills: Usually (90%) none.

Weapon Proficiencies: Small, concealable weapons are ideal for Cutpurses, though they are not formally restricted any more than thieves in general.

Nonweapon Proficiencies: Required: Observation, Trailing, Recommended: Alertness, Begging, Gather Intelligence, Trailing.

Skill Progression: Cutpurses naturally specialize in picking pockets. Beyond this, they typically favor moving silently and hiding in shadows, as these may increase their pickpocketing talents.

Equipment: A few special items to aid in picking pockets are noted in the equipment chapter (p. 90). If thieves have connections, they may be able to purchase such items.

Special Benefits: The effective pickpocket is one who can choose his target carefully. He must learn to ascertain the nature of a prospective victim. How dangerous will the attempt be? What could the target do in response? And does the chance of financial reward outweigh the risks involved?

In game terms, this means that the Cutpurse has the ability to guess the class and level of another character. If the pickpocket makes a successful observation proficiency check, he can accurately determine the target's character class.

Another proficiency check can be made to determine the approximate level of the character. The DM should roll this check secretly. If the check fails, the difference between the number rolled and the number needed for success is how far off the character's estimate is.

Sometimes a Cutpurse will "check out" a character who is in disguise. When this happens, the Cutpurse suffers a penalty of -5 on his proficiency check.

Example: Gorgar the Cutpurse is eyeing an opulent-looking foreigner. Gorgar succeeds in his first observation check, and determines that the man is a wizard. This could be dangerous, he thinks, and he tries to guess how powerful the wizard is.

Gorgar needs to roll a 13 or lower for a successful observation check. The DM rolls the dice secretly for him, and gets a 16. This means that Gorgar's estimate will be 3 levels off.

The wizard is in fact 4th level. The DM decides that, because of the mage's rich dress, Gorgar overestimates the character's level. "You guess that the wizard is around 7th level," says the DM. (Note that characters don't speak in terms of character levels; the thief would have information in less precise terms; but speaking about levels is clearer for communication among players.)

If the DM wished, he could have determined randomly if Gorgar over- or underestimated (e.g., roll 1d6; 1-3: over, 4-6 under).

Special Hindrances: The main hindrance to Cutpurses is that thieves of other kits look down on them, considering them small-time thieves, just half a step above Beggars. This is something the DM should bring out in role-playing—Cutpurse thieves will have difficulty commanding a lot of respect in the underworld.

Races: Cutpurses may come from any race. Half-elves and halflings particularly favor this kit; as do, to a lesser extent, elves.

Fence

Description: The Fence is a black marketeer, a seller of stolen or otherwise illegal goods. He is almost always found in a city setting, where there are large numbers of people to serve as customers as well as prey for the thieves who supply him.

A good Fence needs a sharp mind to appraise people as well as goods, and to stay ahead of the law. To take this kit, therefore, a thief needs a minimum Intelligence of 12.

Role: The Fence is the linchpin in the complicated web of the black market. Thieves sell their illicit acquisitions to the Fence, for some amount of money below their actual value. The Fence then resells the “hot” goods on the black market. If the city in which he operates is large and the goods are minor enough (not the crown jewels of the local royalty), they may be sold directly to local buyers. If the Fence thinks they’re “too hot,” though, he will probably arrange to have them smuggled and sold elsewhere.

Power for Fences is rarely measured in terms of character level. Instead, it is a matter of the breadth of the Fence’s network and the reliability of his contacts. Of course, to acquire or retain an extensive network, a Fence needs much cunning and experience—which may coincidentally result in a high character level.

The most powerful Fences keep their identities secret, and may never see their clients, neither thieves nor buyers. They coordinate things from behind the scenes, and have minor Fences to serve as intermediaries. Even a close contact may never have seen the face of a great Fence—at least, not knowingly. A Fence may secretly play the role of an underling in his own network—or even that of a rival or freelancer!

This may all start to sound familiar to those who know something about thieves’ guilds. The networks of a powerful Fence look increasingly like the structure of a thieves’ guild. This is no coincidence. Those who are knowledgeable in these matters speculate that the thieves’ guild was originally, and in many respects still is, a black market network made into a formal entity.

Fences may be of any social background, though wealthy and noble Fences are rare. Certainly those that do exist diligently keep their identities well-hidden, for obvious reasons. The stakes must be high to claim the attention of the socially and financially elevated.

For example, a rich merchant may deal with stolen jewelry on the side. Or a baron may be the secret mastermind behind a network of thieves smuggling and selling contraband. The real world offers other examples—such as petty dictators who do not only accept bribes and turn a blind eye to drug smugglers but are in fact a drug lord themselves!

The black market network transfers information as well as goods. Fences are probably the best-informed figures of the underworld. For this reason they gain “gather intelligence” as a bonus nonweapon proficiency. (They also receive “appraising” as a bonus proficiency, since it is vital to their vocation.)

Secondary Skills: Gambler, Jeweler, Scribe, Teamster/Freighter, Trader/Barterer.

Weapon Proficiencies: Any.

Nonweapon Proficiencies: Required: Appraising, Gather Intelligence. Recommended: Alertness,

Fast-talking, Forgery, Gem Cutting, Local History, Observation.

Skill Progression: Less powerful Fences (that is, those lower in the network hierarchy, with fewer contacts) may need to make use of thieflly skills. Picking pockets may provide a little income when business is slow; its use for sleight-of-hand may also have value (though it is dangerous to cheat clients). Opening locks and finding and removing traps are useful skills for inspecting merchandise. It is not unknown for Burglars, unable to open a strongbox, to simply cart off the whole thing and hope their Fence can get it open. Read languages is also sometimes useful in examining merchandise. The stealth skills (move silently, etc.) have some value on the street; Fences who have direct contact with their clients may put some time into cultivating them, but more powerful Fences often neglect them.

Equipment: Most Fences own equipment for examining merchandise, to determine if the goods are counterfeit or what their value might be. A magnifying lens, for instance, may be of use here.

Special Benefits: Because of his contacts, a Fence is probably the best person for locating and hiring thieves and smugglers, especially in territory not claimed by a guild.

Also, Fences generally command a lot of respect from the underworld in their home territory. Unless a thief has a serious vendetta, he will probably court a Fence's favor for business reasons. Fences receive a bonus of +3 on reactions with NPC thieves if their profession is recognized.

Special Hindrances: Fences are relatively prominent in the underworld. And, unlike freelance burglars and smugglers who can move from place to place, the Fences' black market network requires a stable home locale, so that they can stay in touch with their contacts. (The DM may wish to keep PCs from being active Fences because of this; the Fence's life is much more business than adventure.) This also means that the local authorities may be aware of a Fence's identity and activities. These authorities may periodically harass a minor Fence, or demand bribes, or may shake him up for information every once in a while.

Races: Fences may be of any race. Some demihuman Fences prefer to deal only in certain goods. Dwarf and gnome Fences, for instance, are known as shrewd appraisers of stolen gems and jewelry.

Investigator

Description: Though Investigators are listed as thieves, they are usually in fact the antithesis of criminals. Investigators are enforcers of law and order, the people who know the skills of the thief intimately so that they can combat him.

Role: Investigators can play a number of roles. They may be private, their services for sale. Or they may be employed by a government or organization. In each case their skills and activities are similar, but their roles and attitudes may be divergent.

An Investigator may be a vigilante, obsessed with uncovering crime wherever it may be hiding, and stopping it. Or he may be the "private eye," a mercenary sort, or retained by an individual or organization, and may be willing to sidestep laws to better serve his client.

Some Investigators are of course in the employ of some government. This does not necessarily identify them as good, however. An Investigator may be portrayed as a sort of "good guy cop," if it suits the campaign. But if the players are running thieves (especially folk hero types), the Investigator could be sinister and evil, a perfect foil to the PC thieves' capers.

The relationship between Investigator thieves and guilds is not usually that of allies. An Investigator might be employed by a guild, however; though usually a Spy, or perhaps a Troubleshooter, would do the guild's "investigating."

In fact, an Investigator might not even realize that he is employed by a guild, if his ostensible employer is a "front" business. Interesting cloak-and-dagger-style adventures could be built around

an Investigator discovering, in the course of his work, that the shadow he is following actually lurks behind his own employer.

And of course, Investigators ostensibly employed by the government, like other magistrates and officials, sometimes “go bad,” and are bought off by a guild, either for information, or in exchange for a blind eye turned toward guild activities.

Secondary Skills: Any are possible, though it is not unusual for an Investigator to have spent his entire adult life in this profession. Among the most useful secondary skills for this kit are armorer, gambler, jeweler, limner/painter, scribe, trader/barterer, and weaponsmith.

Weapon Proficiencies: Investigators are permitted the normal range of weapons open to thieves. They will normally carry two weapons, at least one of them concealed (knife, dagger, or something similarly small, perhaps in a wrist sheath).

Nonweapon Proficiencies: Required: Information Gathering, Observation. Recommended: Alertness, Appraising, Disguise, Fast-Talking, Heraldry, Intimidation, Local History, Modern Languages, Reading Lips, Religion, Trailing.

Skill Progression: A balance of generalized skills serves Investigators well. Picking pockets is less important, of course, although you must remember that it may be useful for sleight-of-hand, which may serve an Investigator. Read language skills are a must for deciphering clues; some criminals write important information in obscure languages or secret codes, and being able to decipher it may mean success or failure for the Investigator. Other skills (lockpicking, trap detection and disarmament, and so on) are useful for penetrating and examining the hideouts and houses of suspects.

Equipment: A lot of the technological devices available to the modern Investigator (such as fingerprinting techniques, searches of computer databases for information, and so forth) would of course not be available in the medieval fantasy setting. Still, it may be possible to duplicate some of the effects of such devices with magical items; or the DM can make liberal use of anachronism. Suppose Investigators are able to dust for fingerprints, for example. A magical device that identifies fingerprints might also exist, allowing the Investigator to learn whose prints he has dusted.

Special Benefits: None.

Special Hindrances: None.

Races: Investigators may be of any race, though they probably should be of the dominant race in their area of operation. A dwarf would probably be best at doing investigative work in the dwarf-dominated quarter of a large city, for instance. This means that most Investigators would be human (a reasonable enough assumption, since human governments would be the ones to use them most frequently). Operations that investigate guilds with many nonhuman members could of course make much use of nonhuman Investigators.

Scout

Description: A Scout is a thief, usually solitary, who operates in a wilderness setting. Besides working as a guide, spy, or saboteur for hire in the wilderness, many Scouts are involved in such illicit activities as poaching.

The Scout kit has no requirements beyond those of the thief class.

Role: One might say that Scouts are to thieves as rangers are to fighters—but they avoid the strict “silly ethics” of the ranger class. Scouts are not prohibited from being good—and in fact they are, on the whole, a good deal more dependable than thieves in general—but they have a cutthroat streak that can be dangerous and unpredictable. However, their rugged individualism and harsh practical judgement often endears them to adventurers, and many are found among such steadfast, daring companions.

Unlike Bandits (who also operate chiefly in the wilderness), the Scout usually shuns the company of other thieves, including guilds. The guilds, in turn, care little about Scouts. Their poaching and small-time thievery is seen as insignificant in the eyes of the great crime figures, especially when compared to the trouble and expense that would be required to identify and to track down the elusive Scouts, to punish them or force them to join guild ranks. If a Scout is a guild member, either it is a voluntary arrangement (whereby the Scout benefits from access to special equipment and training) or he has spent enough “professional time” in the city or other explicitly guild-controlled territory that he was “persuaded” to join.

Of the many Scouts not belonging to a guild, some have a single, consistent employer. The rest are freelance or mercenary, serving themselves or whatever employers may come along, taking the best pay they can find. Or, if there’s nothing else, they steal and poach to support themselves.

Several organizations employ Scouts regularly, sometimes on a permanent basis. The military, in particular, does so; reliable Scouts, trained for reconnaissance and sabotage, are vital to any successful military operation. And the key to having reliable Scouts is to have well-trained and (most of all) happy Scouts. A common grunt soldier can be bullied into line and, if need be, forced out into battle by the spearheads of the rank behind him—but the Scout’s *modus operandi* is to explore alone. Maltreated Scouts have more opportunities to desert or, worse yet, betray vital information to the enemy than anyone else in an army.

Military Scouts are carefully nurtured and well-nourished. They get decent pay, excellent equipment, and the best training available for their special and important activities. The training of military Scouts is at least as intense and comprehensive as that of a thieves’ guild. (Sometimes, after retiring from the army, military Scouts go on to become the most illustrious and prosperous burglars and assassins of the underworld.)

A few other groups that may employ Scouts are secret societies and other paramilitary groups, thieves’ guilds that have operations across the wilderness (Scouts may bolster the ranks of a smuggling party, for example), and agencies that are set up to connect clients with guides. Such agencies are normally found on the edge of vast wilderness areas that are being colonized; such areas, with frequent exploration by people unfamiliar with the region, have enough demand for guides that an agency can prosper on its percentage of the guide’s fee.

As mentioned before, poaching is also an activity typical of the Scout. Animals may be protected by royal decree, written law, or the monopoly of a hunters’ or furriers’ guild. In medieval times, for instance, hunting was typically reserved for the noble classes. A commoner caught slaying one of “the king’s deer” could be punished by death.

But when demand exceeds supply, there may be great incentive for the criminal killing and capture of animals. They may be sought for their meat, valuable pelts, ivory, feathers, magical purposes (e.g., eye of newt), or other esoteric ends. Thousands of animals in our world have been killed because some body part was believed to be an aphrodisiac. In the fantasy milieu, there may be real magical qualities, and the hunter or poacher’s quarry may be fantastic. The horn of the unicorns, for instance, may be ground into powder and administered with liquid as a poison antidote.

Secondary Skills: Bowyer/Fletcher, Farmer, Fisher, Forester, Gambler, Groom, Hunter, Teamster/Freighter, Trader/Barterer, Trapper/Furrier, Woodworker/Carpenter.

Weapon Proficiencies: Scouts have the normal range of weapon proficiencies permitted to thieves.

Nonweapon Proficiencies: Required: Alertness, Direction Sense, Tracking. Recommended: Alertness, Animal Handling/Training, Animal Lore, Animal Noise, Boating, Fire-building, Fishing, Heraldry, Herbalism, Hunting, Mountaineering, Observation, Riding, Rope Use, Set Snares, Survival, Swimming, Weather Sense.

Skill Progression: Stealth skills are those favored most by the Scout, and members of this kit have

highly trained senses. Therefore it would make sense for these skills to improve most rapidly: move silently, hide in shadows, and hear noise. Climb walls also may see considerable use (though not from climbing walls, per se, but trees, cliffs, and so forth).

Equipment: No self-respecting Scout will permit himself to go without a basic assortment of wilderness survival gear: adequate clothing, rations, fire-starting materials, etc. Special gear to assist climbing, hiding, and moving undetected are also favored, as well as devices for hindering or diverting pursuers. (What worth is a Scout's knowledge if he never reports back to his employer?) For a full array of items, refer to Chapter 5, "Tools of the Trade."

Special Benefits: Due to their extensive wilderness experience and expertise, Scouts gain +10% on two thief skills when in the wilderness: silent movement and hiding in shadows. Scouts also have an increased chance (1 in 6 better) to surprise opponents in the wilderness, because of their stealthiness and careful attunement with their environment.

Special Hindrances: While Scouts are intimately familiar with the wilderness, they are not so comfortable in urban settings. In the city, consequently, the Scout suffers a -5% penalty on all thieves' skills.

Races: The Scout kit is a good choice for many demihuman rogues, since those races often already have an aptitude for wilderness adventuring. You may wish to give demihuman Scouts a particular orientation according to their race. Elves for instance, as natural forest dwellers, may have +15% when hiding in shadows and moving silently in forested wilderness, and +5% in other wilderness settings. For a dwarf, the special bonus may apply to hills or mountains, and so forth.

Smuggler

Description: A Smuggler is a specialist in the illicit movement of goods, either goods that are themselves illegal (e.g., stolen) or whose movement is illegal (in some countries, for example, it may be illegal to move gold bullion; or a Smuggler might secretly move cargo to avoid paying taxes on it). The Smuggler needs a host of practical skills to evade authorities, as well as connections in diverse places to acquire and unload his merchandise on the black market.

Role: The Smuggler plays a vital role in the underworld, moving goods from place to place. Without the Smuggler, Fences could only sell to local buyers, which would mean they couldn't deal in exceptionally valuable goods. This would greatly cut the profitability of theft. Guilds themselves might not even be able to function, at least not on a large scale.

There are two general methods of protecting contraband from discovery: Either you hide the goods within the transportation, or you hide the means of transportation itself. An example of the former would be a wagon or boat built with a false floor, beneath which the cargo is hidden. Hidden transportation would include sneaking oneself over the city wall late at night, with a pack full of stolen loot to be taken to a distant Fence; or, perhaps, a simple boat traveling late at night.

Plans for hidden transportation may become elaborate. The trick is to be small and fast. Small makes it more difficult to find you; fast makes it likely that you can get through or, at least, get away, even if you are discovered. Sometimes the best smuggling routes go through treacherous territory or difficult terrain. This means that a Smuggler must be flexible. For instance, he may arrange to bring a canoe or even smaller craft to traverse a swamp or area of many small lakes and streams, portaging when necessary and leaving the canoe behind (and hidden, of course) when he has passed the natural obstacles.

If the Smugglers will pass through dangerous territory (plagued by bandits, humanoids or monsters, for instance), it is best to work out some means of protection: Either bring along a couple of thugs or mercenaries for the difficult parts, or pay "protection money" to the dangerous parties. Most

bandits or humanoids, and even intelligent monsters, would be perfectly happy to let Smugglers through in return for a cut of their merchandise.

Or they may tell the Smugglers that they can pass safely through, and then renege on the deal.

For such a situation, it is best for the Smuggler to have some powerful muscle behind him—like a guild. A great many Smugglers are part of guilds. Guilds that operate in more than one urban center, or in the countryside, usually employ a number of Smugglers just to move people and items within their own networks. They may also have Smugglers who specialize in dealing with other guilds; such Smugglers should have a high Charisma, because they must serve as diplomats as well as businessmen. Finally, there are freelance Smugglers. They may operate between guilds, between guilds and freelance fences, or, on rare occasion, solely among freelance fences.

Remember that a Smuggler operates between fences; he rarely, if ever, deals directly with thieves or non-“wholesale” customers. The fence or guild works out deals with prospective buyer fences, and then hires the Smuggler to make the delivery.

Secondary Skills: Farmer, Fisher, Forester, Gambler, Groom, Hunter, Jeweler, Navigator, Sailor, Teamster/Freighter, Trader/Barterer, Trapper/Furrier.

Weapon Proficiencies: Smugglers have the normal range of weapons open to thieves, and are not required to take proficiencies with any in particular.

Nonweapon Proficiencies: Required: None. Recommended: Alertness, Animal Handling/Training, Animal Noise, Appraising, Boating, Direction Sense, Disguise, Fast-talking, Forgery, Gather Intelligence, Navigation, Observation, Rope Use, Seamanship, Swimming.

Skill Progression: Detecting noise is probably the most useful of the traditional thieves’ skills for the Smuggler. After that, hiding in shadows and silent movement probably see a lot of use. Pickpocketing would be least utilized in smuggling.

Equipment: Two items are essential to the Smuggler’s vocation: means of transportation, and means of protecting the contraband from discovery.

Transportation is usually very basic: wagon or horse for land, boat for water, and so forth. More elaborate smuggling plans in the fantasy setting may include air transportation—imagine a Smuggler who secrets stolen gems out of a city, late on moonless nights, by griffon!

Items from the “Evasions” section of the chapter on equipment (p. 90) are of great use to the Smuggler. Marbles (if the surface is right) or caltrops can do much to hamper pursuers, and aniseed or dog pepper can throw dogs off the trail.

Special Benefits: Smugglers must be exceptionally alert; they therefore get a +1 bonus to their surprise roll.

Special Hindrances: None.

Races: While demihumans are not prohibited from being smugglers, there are few that have any reason to be. Any player who wishes to have a demi-human smuggler should be sure to detail his character background so as to justify the kit.

Spy

Description: The Spy is a gatherer of information. At the lowest level, he is a common informant, an eavesdropper with his ears open for salable information. The expert Spy is hired by guilds and governments to infiltrate opponents’ buildings and ranks to find vital, secret knowledge.

To take the Spy kit, a thief must have a minimum Intelligence of 11.

Role: Spies are vital in supporting any large organization such as a guild or government. Information is the key to success, whether thieves are preparing for a burglary or a nation is preparing for war, and the Spy’s role is to provide that information.

Most Spies are in the permanent service of one such organization. A small number may be double (or triple) agents, but that is very risky. A few are freelance, and their main problem is this: to find employment, they must be known; but if they're known, they have difficulty being successful.

Spies may come from any background. A large percentage, in fact, are from the lower classes, close in touch with the word on the street and all the secret channels of society. A smaller number of elite Spies exist, either in permanent positions (e.g., a count who reports word on his liege's troop movements to a rival kingdom, or a treacherous castle steward). Most of these characters would not be of the Spy rogue kit, since spying is secondary; the focus of their life is (or at least was) something else.

But there are also talented individuals ready to go anywhere, risk any danger, and encounter a lot of excitement on the way to finding the knowledge they seek. They excel at infiltration, in finding information, not just in selling what they know. Exciting Spies, and player characters, are usually of this sort.

The standard penalty for spying (if the crime is beyond the low levels of spreading rumors, eavesdropping, and scoping out potential burglary targets) is death, and Spies from one nation to another can hardly expect anything in the line of "diplomatic immunity."

Secondary Skills: Any.

Weapon Proficiencies: The normal range of weapons open for thieves' proficiencies applies to Spies as well, and they are not required to take any in particular. A Spy can use nonthief weapons (for the purpose of disguises), but cannot take proficiency in them.

Example: To help impersonate a castle guard, a Spy carries a halberd. He could use it combat, but he would suffer a nonproficiency penalty. To increase his chances of success, he would probably switch to a different, familiar weapon—even a dagger or knife—unless circumstances prohibit it (e.g., people around him would be surprised to see him not using the halberd, and might thereby see through the disguise).

Nonweapon Proficiencies: Required: Disguise, Gather Intelligence, Observation. Recommended: Alertness, Begging, Etiquette, Forgery, Heraldry, Local History, Reading/Writing, Reading Lips, Trailing.

Skill Progression: An effective Spy usually needs a fairly even distribution of thief skills, since his vocation can bring him into any number of diverse situations.

Equipment: Spies in the medieval setting don't have all the fancy gadgetry of their modern counterparts. They may equip themselves liberally with what is available, however, such as boots with hidden compartments in the soles, thieves' equipment, and so forth. See the later chapter on equipment for a host of ideas.

Special Benefits: None.

Special Hindrances: None.

Races: Elves and half-elves, with their love for knowledge, are especially predisposed toward this kit. However, the problem that all demihuman Spies face is the difficulty of appearing disguised as a member of another race. They therefore risk having a rather limited range of professional assignments.

Swashbuckler

Description: Part acrobat, part swordsman, part wit, and entirely roguish —this is the Swashbuckler. He is a sophisticated city-dweller, the epitome of charm and grace.

Both the warrior and thief classes have Swashbucklers (see the *Complete Fighter's Handbook* for details on the warrior Swashbuckler), but they have certain differences. These differences serve,

among other purposes, as an example of how the Dungeon Master may modify appropriate kits from one class and apply them to another.

To be a Swashbuckler, a thief must have minimum scores of 13 in Strength, Dexterity, Intelligence and Charisma.

Role: This is a happy-go-lucky thief, with ready wit and flashing rapier. His home is the city, where he can shine amidst the squalor. He is generally less interested than his warrior counterpart in poking people with his rapier, and is more involved and concerned with his wild theatrics and amazing displays of acrobatic skills. More often than not he also finds himself, justly or not, on the wrong side of the law.

The Swashbuckler is almost never aligned with thieves' guilds; he prefers to be "freelance." Swashbucklers who journey outside the cities may align themselves with bandits or pirates, however, and with their charisma and skill, they frequently assume leadership. Such responsibility ill suits the Swashbuckler, however; the details of organizing and leading a large group will invariably set him packing in short order.

Most Swashbucklers come from a wealthy or aristocratic background. Their skills of stealth and acrobatics came not from survival needs, but whim. This motivation typically remains the driving force behind the Swashbuckler's career. Most of these young rakes retire when they get older and must assume responsibilities in the communities (family, noble title, business, and so forth). Many a Swashbuckler has kept up his activities, however, in secret; his moonlighting may even be developed (usually purposely) to a point of distinguishable alter-egos. The daytime character may be a foppish dandy, gruff businessman, or airhead noblewoman. At night the Swashbuckler emerges: a cunning, dashing, adventurous character.

What are the goals of the Swashbuckler? For the young ones, it is usually just thrills: a chance to break into the impenetrable castle, to replace the Queen's necklace with a fake, to outwit the guildmaster of thieves . . . A few have more serious goals (and these are the ones who tend to keep up their habit). A Swashbuckler may be a vigilante, charming and witty, but driven by an obsession for justice. His enemies may be criminals or, in an unjust society (where the aristocratic Swashbuckler's alter-ego may be an unwilling part of the apparatus of oppression), the authorities themselves.

Secondary Skills: Most often (80% of the time, say) a Swashbuckler has no secondary skills, since he usually is from a rich, foppish background. Perhaps he has the skills of gambler or groom (aristocratic animals, of course), or hunter (again, aristocratic hunting, not survival; a Swashbuckler may know a great deal about fox hunting, for instance, but not how to catch a rabbit, let alone skin one). Scribe would also be possible as a secondary skill—to indicate literacy and some general education, not a profession.

Weapon Proficiencies: The Swashbuckler receives an extra weapon proficiency slot which must be devoted to a weapon among the following: stiletto, main-gauche, rapier, and sabre. (These new weapons are described in the equipment chapter.) With this, the Swashbuckler's "weapon of choice," the thief is able to fight with the THACO of a fighter of his experience level. Throughout his career, he must devote half of his weapon proficiencies to these weapons, until he has mastered the use of (i.e., gained proficiency in) every one.

Nonweapon Proficiencies: Required: Etiquette, Tumbling. Recommended: Alertness, Blind-fighting, Disguise, Fast-talking, Intimidation, Jumping, Navigation (if seaborne; costs 2 slots), Riding, Tightrope walking, Trailing.

Skill Progression: Swashbucklers would tend to have fairly balanced thief skills. This includes pickpocketing, though that talent is more often utilized in the form of sleight of hand.

Equipment: The Swashbuckler must buy his weapon of choice, but other than that may spend his

gold however he pleases.

Special Benefits: The Swashbuckler is permitted a special combat maneuver when using his weapon of choice: disarmament. To disarm an opponent, the Swashbuckler must declare his intention to do so before initiative is rolled. He then suffers a +1 penalty to his initiative roll, and a -4 penalty on his roll to hit.

If the Swashbuckler's attack is successful, he will (normally) cause his enemy's weapon to go flying out of his hand.

Roll 2d6. The number rolled is the number of feet away the weapon landed. Another roll of 1d6 determines the direction the weapon goes, relative to the disarmed character:

- 1—Straight ahead
- 2—Ahead, right
- 3—Behind, right
- 4—Straight behind
- 5—Behind, left
- 6—Behind, right

Besides weapons, disarmament can be attempted against magic wands or other such devices held in one hand.

Items worn (like jewelry) or held in two hands (including two-handed weapons) may not be affected by a thief Swashbuckler with the disarm maneuver.

Finally, being such a romantic figure, the Swashbuckler gains, as an additional special benefit, a +2 reaction adjustment with members of the opposite sex.

Special Hindrances: Trouble seeks out the Swashbuckler. This is something that the DM will have to play very carefully if the Swashbuckler is to be balanced with the other thief kits. When there's another Swashbuckler around—thief or warrior—intent on proving that he is the finest swordsman in the world, it's the PC Swashbuckler he seeks out and challenges (often in the middle of some illicit activities). When there is a lovely lady (or handsome young man, as appropriate) in distress, she or he will naturally cross the Swashbuckler's path, and pull him into the tangle. When the thief is practicing burglary on his uncle's mansion, the old man decides to return early from his journey. Life conspires to make things difficult for the Swashbuckler, and the DM should always throw just a little more good-natured bad luck at this thief type than at any other.

Races: Any demihuman who'd look elegant in foppish dress, wielding a narrow blade, will work fine as a Swashbuckler, especially elves, half-elves and halflings (half-elves most of all). Dwarves and gnomes are not entirely inappropriate, but are likely to have to defend their honor (with duels) in the face of numerous jokes about their curious looks.

Swindler

Description: This is the master of deception; while burglars and pickpockets profit through stealth, and bandits and thugs garner their earnings through force, the Swindler relies on his wits. Other thieves take their booty; the Swindler cons his victim into giving it freely.

A minimum Charisma of 12 is required of a thief to take this kit.

Role: There are numerous names for the Swindler—confidence artist, con man, mountebank, quack, etc.—and the scams he employs are even greater in number.

Each con artist is unique, and develops his own mode of operation. One will specialize in selling bogus items, like medicines; while another may prepare long, elaborate scams to net the wealth of

the affluent.

Swindlers must either operate in a large city, where there are many potential victims (and even then they usually target visitors to the city, especially foreigners); or they must be wanderers, ready to move on to a new place when they've made too many enemies or too much of the local populous has gotten wise to their devices.

For this and other reasons, Swindlers do not usually join thieves' guilds on a permanent basis. Out of wise deference to the "local boys," however, a Swindler that begins to operate in guild territory will make friendly overtures to it, and perhaps offer a share in his take. A most daring Swindler may even try to con the guild . . .

Secondary Skills: Any. Most often Gambler or Trader/Barterer.

Weapon Proficiencies: The Swindler is permitted the normal range of weapons open to thieves.

Nonweapon Proficiencies: Required: Fast-talking. Recommended: Alertness, Appraising, Artistic Ability, Dancing, Disguise, Etiquette, Forgery, Fortune Telling, Gaming, Local History, Observation, Singing, Ventriloquism.

Skill Progression: The thieves' skills of a Swindler usually are used in preparation for a con. It is often handy for the Swindler to do some secret scouting, for instance, to observe his victim's habits. For all of this, the stealth skills (move silently, etc.) are invaluable. Reading languages is also of more use to the Swindler than to thieves of many other kits.

Equipment: A Swindler may use special equipment as props for his scams (e.g., tarot cards for a sham fortune teller; pen, ink and paper for forgery; and so forth), but the specific needs vary among characters, according to their plans and objectives.

Special Benefits: None.

Special Hindrances: None.

Races: Half-elves make particularly good Swindlers. Other demi-humans may be Swindlers as well, though they are not found as frequently.

Thug

Description: The Thug is the most violent sort of thief. Assassins are killers, certainly, but they depend on refinement and subtlety. Bounty hunters also are willing to use violence, but are relatively restrained as well. The Thug, on the other hand, comes as close to the warrior class as any Thief Kit.

Because of the kit's emphasis on physique and physical prowess, a Thug must have a minimum ability scores of 12 in strength and constitution. In designing the character's description, a Thug should be as physically imposing as possible. Furthermore, his intelligence may be no higher than 12.

Thugs are usually male, but this may be otherwise in your campaign (particularly if your world sports an Amazon tradition).

Role: Historically, the "Thuggee" were actually a cult group of murderers found in India. The term "Thug" has come to mean, however, any brutal sort of thief, such as an armed robber, hijacker, or goon (the latter specifically indicating a guild-associated Thug, an enforcer), or perhaps a kidnapper (though bounty hunters are probably better at that activity).

If one compared a guild to the human body, surely Thugs would be the muscle—the large, powerful muscles. Thugs function as enforcers, intimidating common people (especially in racketeering schemes), bodyguarding important guildsmen, and carrying out the guild's threats of violence often enough to keep people suitably afraid.

In fact, outside of the thieves' guild, the Thug really does not have a place. Most Thugs haven't the wit to become accomplished burglars or even pickpockets on their own, let alone swindlers, spies or

fences. Even begging might be denied them on account of their imposing physique: A plea for alms from a huge, muscular man tends to look more like a demand backed up by a thinly-veiled threat. The guild pays them well and gives them a satisfying job: They usually need just to scare the living daylights out of people, and not even face real combat.

The few Thugs who are not guild-affiliated will be found as armed robbers or (if they are more intelligent) kidnappers or hijackers.

Secondary skills: Most often none (the ultimate “unskilled” labor, or perhaps Sailor).

Weapon Proficiencies: Thugs are permitted an extra weapon proficiency slot at first level. They may choose non-thief weapons, but to gain proficiency in one requires an extra slot.

Nonweapon Proficiencies: Required: Intimidation. Recommended: Player’s choice; among those that may be selected are Alertness, Endurance, Looting and Trailing.

Skill Progression: There is no uniform preference among Thugs for the distribution of points among their thieves’ skills. Note, however, that they start out with fewer points to distribute than other rogues (see Special Hindrances, below).

Equipment: The Thug’s equipment usually consists of the biggest, most intimidating weapon available. Otherwise, it’s a matter of common sense according to the job. A kidnapper, for example, could make good use of a rope to bind his victim.

Special Benefits: Because they are better trained in combat than other thieves, Thugs receive +1 on their “to hit” rolls.

Special Hindrances: Thugs spend much of their early career learning about weapons and their use, and their initial training in the traditional thief skills suffers as a consequence. To compensate for the extra weapon proficiency slot and combat bonus, a thief of the Thug kit has only 40 points to distribute initially among his thief skills (although he can still put up to 30 of them in a single ability, if he so chooses).

Races: Humanoids and half-humanoids are particularly fond of this kit, as it emphasizes force over stealth. One has more difficulty imagining demi-human Thugs; dwarves might have the temperament, but the Thug personality doesn’t suit their culture, and their small stature would make them look somewhat silly as guild enforcers (which is not to say that they would be ineffective—they’d simply bash anyone who made thoughtless or snide comments about their height).

Troubleshooter

Description: The Troubleshooter, like the investigator, is often aligned against other thieves. He has all the skills of the thief, but puts them to a different use: He works chiefly as a security consultant, playing the part of the thief in order to test the worthiness of his clients’ defenses.

Role: The Troubleshooter’s professional role is rather narrowly defined, but this is to the rogues’ liking. More than one has been known to moonlight in other, possibly illicit activities. They may range from legitimate recovery of stolen goods through genuine burglary.

As a “security consultant,” a thief of this sort has a legitimate reason for his thieving skills and equipment; and the temptation for many is to use them. For this reason, officials often keep a suspicious eye on well-known Troubleshooters. More sophisticated governments may even require that they have some sort of license.

Troubleshooters are rarely guild members, naturally enough, unless they have been bought off in exchange for information on the clients they’ve served. Of course, few such Troubleshooters will survive long; if they give a place’s security their “seal of approval,” and then it is broken into with ease, the Troubleshooter’s reputation will be shot, and he can expect to have more than a little suspicion placed on his shoulders.

Secondary Skills: Any. Often has technical or engineering-type skills, however, such as Armorer, Mason, Miner, Navigator, Weaponsmith, or Woodworker/Carpenter.

Weapon Proficiencies: Troubleshooters are permitted the normal weapons open to thieves.

Nonweapon Proficiencies: Required: Observation. Recommended: Player's choice; among those that may be selected are Alertness, Fast-talking, Gather Intelligence, Locksmithing, and Trailing.

Skill Progression: Picking pockets and reading languages are not of much value to the Troubleshooter, but he will probably seek a fairly even distribution among the other thief skills.

Equipment: Any Troubleshooter worth his wages will augment his thieflly talents with the best available equipment. Remember, he wants to try his absolute best to break down his client's defense—as does his client—so he'll use whatever devices will increase his chances. Also, a wealthy client could even be persuaded to help the Troubleshooter acquire hard-to-find thief equipment.

Special Benefits and Hindrances: Troubleshooters have an uncanny knack for . . . well, for troubleshooting. If there's a glitch somewhere in a security system, the Troubleshooter always seems to run into it.

In a way, the Troubleshooter is a living manifestation of "Murphy's Law": "If anything can go wrong, it will." The Troubleshooter thief, of course, capitalizes on this professionally. His job is to find everything that can go wrong, so it can be fixed.

While everything going wrong has its ironic professional advantage, the downside is of course that the things that go wrong often do so to the Troubleshooter's personal disadvantage.

This is difficult to quantify, to define as a game mechanic. Instead, the DM is encouraged to bring it in at his discretion during play, for maximum excitement and role-playing fun. Fill the character's life with astronomically improbable events and bizarre coincidences.

The DM is by and large left on his own to "wing it" with this special benefit/hindrance, but there are two questions for him to ask himself before he brings it into play: Would this further the plot of the adventure? Would it be fun? At least the second question should be answered "yes," and it is best if both are.

Furthermore, the rule to follow in deciding the specifics is: Everything should be balanced. For every freakish mishap that works in the Troubleshooter's favor, there should be a complementary one that works to his disadvantage.

Races: Dwarves, with their affinity for the mechanical and their lawful tendencies (and their dour stoicism in the face of all misfortune, however ludicrous), are the demi-humans most inclined to take this kit.

Some gnomes also may be found as Troubleshooters; the special benefit/hindrance of this kit suits the pranksters well—but their employers would best be on guard for practical jokes perpetrated in the course of the assignment. The goal of any gnome Troubleshooter should be to turn all his mishaps into assets or amusement, if not both.

Recording Kits on the Character Sheet

It's really no problem to record your Thief Kit on your character record sheet. Where you normally write down the character's class, add also his Thief Kit name. For instance, if your thief takes the cutpurse kit, you would write "Thief/Cutpurse."

Where you normally write his nonweapon proficiencies, add the ones (if any) you got free from the Thief Kit, and designate them with asterisks to indicate their bonus status. Wherever you have space for notes, mark down the character's special benefits, hindrances, and other facts you want to remember.

Thief Types and Multi-Class Characters

The Advanced Thief Types options are designed to add depth to a thief character. But if the character is already multi-classed (as are many demi-humans; e.g., a halfling fighter/thief), he doesn't really need any more depth. Therefore only single-class thieves can take one of the Thief Kits described above.

However, with the flexibility available to thieves in the 2nd edition AD&D® game, especially with nonweapon proficiency rules, you can very closely simulate a kit by carefully choosing proficiencies and allotting points among thief skills. The character won't get the special benefits of the kit (e.g., the bonus nonweapon proficiencies), but to outward appearances, the character will be that type of thief.

For instance, suppose a halfling fighter/thief wishes to be a fence. If the Secondary Skills system is being used, he should take one of those listed in the fence kit—Trader/Barterer, let's say.

As a first level thief, he receives 4 nonweapon proficiencies (if they are used) and selects them from the required and recommended proficiencies of the kit. The required ones are Appraising and Information Gathering. Note that these proficiencies are NOT bonuses, because the halfling is not actually taking the kit. His other two slots should be filled from the recommended list; fast-talking and observation proficiencies, perhaps.

If you do all this, and have your DM's permission, within the context of your campaign this halfling will be considered a fence. That is, he fills the role of a fence in the campaign world, and is regarded as such by other figures of the underworld. Only you and the DM know that he doesn't have all the benefits of a true fence.

Thief Types and Dual-Class Characters

The same is not true of dual-class characters.

If a human character starts off as a thief, he may take any of the Thief Kits above. If, later, he decides to change classes according to the normal Dual-Class Benefits and Restrictions rules, he doesn't lose any of the benefits or hindrances of the kit he chose; he is still that sort of thief.

If a character starts off as some other character class and then, later, switches to one of the thief classes, he can choose a Thief Kit at that time, though the DM may insist that certain campaign events take place in order to allow him to do this.

For instance, let us suppose that a human fighter decides, later in life, to become a thief, and he wants to be an Acrobat. There's nothing wrong with that, but the DM should insist that the next several adventures deal with the transformation. The character could join a circus, perhaps, where he could be taught the tricks of the trade. Adventures should be built around this setting, and should somehow involve other player-characters in the campaign as well.

To better simulate the wait involved for the character to learn his new trade, the DM is within his rights to insist that the character not receive his Thief Kit until he's reached second experience level in his new class.

Creating New Kits

If there's a special type of thief that the DM would like to have in his world, he can design a new Thief Kit for that thief-type.

To design a Thief Kit, you must answer the following questions about this sort of thief and its role in your campaign.

Description: What is this thief type? What literary, mythological or historical source is he drawn from? What special requirements are there if a character wishes to be one?

Role: What is this thief type to be in the campaign? How does his culture regard him? How does his subculture, the underworld, regard him? Is there a special sort of outlook he needs to have to belong to this thief type? And what does this thief tend to do in a campaign? Reading the earlier chapter on role-playing thieves may give you some more ideas for this section.

Legal Issues: What legal penalties, if any, are there in your campaign for the activities with which this sort of thief is involved? A little bit of historical or literary research may help you get ideas, or you can just make things up to suit your campaign.

Secondary Skills: If you're using the Secondary Skills system, you need to determine if this thief type requires such a skill. If no one secondary skill, or limited range of secondary skills, should be common to all thieves of this type, then don't require a secondary skill. But if all members of a thief type seem to have a particular skill or one of a small number of skills, then you should limit the choice of characters who select the kit to that skill or skills.

Weapon Proficiencies: Some thief types gravitate toward specific weapon types, or are more open-ended than other thieves in the range of weapons that they may choose. If this is the case with the thief type you are simulating, then make note of it in the kit.

Nonweapon Proficiencies: Most thief types seem to have certain skills in common. It would be silly to have an Acrobat without jumping, tumbling and tightrope walking, for example. So you may assign up to two proficiency slots to be given free to the character. If it's appropriate, the proficiencies may come from listings not appropriate to thieves (the Priest, Warrior and Wizard listings). Though normally the cost in slots for non-thief proficiencies would be higher, it doesn't matter if the proficiencies are being given for free. See the chapter on Proficiencies for more information and new proficiencies from which to choose.

Skill Progression: Which of the traditional thieves' skills are most important to this sort of character, such that the character should concentrate his experience on them?

Equipment: If a thief type is known for having specific types of equipment, require of the thief that he have such equipment when he enters the campaign. If a thief seems to prefer a specific type of equipment, but it's not so widespread a choice that you don't feel like requiring it of the character, simply list the types of equipment that the thief prefers and recommend the character take them.

Special Benefits: Every thief type could have some special benefit, but it's not absolutely necessary. It's up to you to choose what that benefit is, but it should fit in with the way this thief appears to function in fiction, folklore, or wherever he comes from. Types of benefits include: Bonuses to reaction rolls (especially from certain categories of people), bonuses on thief skill use (especially in certain situation), and special abilities.

Special Hindrances: You should also provide a special hindrance (or hindrances) which limit the character about as much as his benefits help him, especially if you have given him a Special Benefit. Such hindrances can include: Penalties to reaction rolls (especially from certain categories of people), inability to learn specific weapon or nonweapon proficiencies; special vulnerabilities in combat or to certain magic; or special restrictions in the culture in which the character normally lives.

Races: If there are variations to the kit based on the character's race, note them here. Some races can't take a specific kit; some will have different proficiencies, benefits and hindrances attached to them.

Notes: If you have any additional notes about the Thief Kits pertinent to your campaign (such as which players you'd prefer for specific kits, for example), put them here.

The Thief Kit Creation Sheet

Following is the Thief Kit Creation Sheet. If you wish to design a new thief kit, just photocopy the sheet and design your new kit upon it. When you're showing the Thief Kits above to your players, also include the new kits that you have designed yourself.

The "Lone Wolf": Unique Thieves

Most thieves go through a period of training and apprenticeship, as do legitimate tradesmen. They are taught by an established, experienced thief, who was taught by a thief before him. This goes back untold generations, to the earliest thieves who developed skills on their own and then shared them with partners and apprentices. Over the years the skills and techniques have been formalized and perfected, especially under the normalizing influence of the large and powerful guilds that have arisen.

But not every thief is molded in this way. There are always others, known as "lone wolves," who developed outside the "system" of the established underworld. They discovered and developed their larcenous abilities without the aid of a mentor.

Many lone wolves resemble normal thieves so closely that they may be treated as the very same thing, as far as class, abilities and restrictions go.

However, in some cases a lone wolf may turn out very different—perhaps different enough to be considered a class unto himself. To design such a character, you may use the optional rules, "Creating a New Class," in Chapter Three of the *Dungeon Master's Guide*.

The emphasis of such a character should still be on thief's skills, but it may be that not all of the traditional skills are present. And the character may have other unusual abilities as well, cultivated to assist in his roguish endeavors.

Imagine, for instance, a self-taught pickpocket. He may have Pick Pockets, Move Silently and Hide in Shadows, and perhaps Climb Walls (to help get himself over fences or whatever when he is pursued by an observant and angry victim). But he could have no other thief skills; for his thieving lifestyle there was no need for them.

Note how this would be different from a traditional thief specialized in pickpocketing (as in, for example, the cutpurse kit): Even though he specializes in the course of his career, the cutpurse received a core training that included all the thief traditional skills—a liberal arts education in larceny, if you will.

Lone wolves often lead dangerous lives. They must be very self-reliant, and they have to find their own contacts for scoping out jobs and fencing stolen goods. As "freelancers" they run a constant and most serious risk of running afoul of monopolistic thieves' guilds.

Guilds are often wary of lone wolves, who are more likely than "established" thieves, with trusted contacts and reliable references, to be spies for authorities or rival guilds. The lone wolf is also regarded by guildsmen with a mix of curiosity and contempt—and sometimes even admiration, if his odd mix of abilities proves particularly useful "in the field."

A lone wolf, as we said, may be a character class unto himself. Most such classes never have more than one member, and when he dies his unique combination of skills is forgotten; the class ceases to be. On rare occasion a lone wolf may take an apprentice or two, and the class may be perpetuated in this manner. (If you are using the 1st edition AD&D® game, you may suppose that the Assassin class arose in this manner.)

Guilds who have accepted lone wolves into their ranks may ask the thief to take on apprentices—

but two things usually prevent this: One, conservative guildmembers typically see the lone wolf’s unorthodox methods as a threat (because they are not understood), or as inferior to the traditional way of doing things; and two, lone wolves, used to doing things by themselves, are reluctant to share their secrets. An example follows:

“Bluehand” Ajathar, Lone Wolf

This is an example of a “lone wolf” thief, created with the character creation system in Chapter Three of the *Dungeon Master’s Guide*.

Ajathar was originally apprenticed to an illusionist. He never completed his formal training, however. His master, Zalabom the Magnificent, was outspoken on a number of religious and political issues. One day his words went too far against the popular grain, and a mob dragged him from his tower, stoned him to death, and set fire to the building after looting it. Young Ajathar narrowly escaped with his life and a couple of texts of illusion magic.

Homeless and hungry, Ajathar had to steal for a living. Assisted by what few illusions he could muster, he became a burglar—and a surprisingly proficient one, considering that he was self-taught. As his burglary skills improved, so did his understanding of the magical arts of deception.

He took as his symbol, his trademark to be left at each “job,” an illusionary blue hand. The illusion would fade after a few days—but its discovery came to invariably bring panic to the heart of anyone who discovered it in his house. Sometimes Ajathar would not take a thing, but only leave the hand as a warning, a taunt, a mockery of a house’s easily-penetrated defenses.

Eventually Ajathar moved on. His native town, where Zalabom was killed, was neither affluent nor an exciting place for a daring young entrepreneur. “Bluehand” may therefore be found anywhere that the DM should wish to relocate him.

One peculiarity of Ajathar’s character is his strict adherence to the alignment of True Neutrality. The lesson he gained from Zalabom’s death is that extremism and fanaticism in any form are dangerous and to be avoided. Both the illusionist and the bloodthirsty crowd are, to Ajathar’s mind in hindsight, repulsive. Any apprentice that Bluehand might train would have to be True Neutral as well.

Following are the elements of unique class, along with the multiplier of each (see DMG, Tables Eleven to Eighteen): Fight as thief (-1); Saving throws as thief (0); 1d4 hit dice type (+0.5); No armor permitted—interferes with spellcasting as well as thief skills (-1); Weapons: any (0); +1 hp per level beyond 9th (+0.5); 6 initial proficiency slots (+1.5), select as if a normal thief of the cat burglar kit; Climb walls (+1); Find/remove traps (+1); Open locks (+1); Move silently (+1); Hide in shadows (+1); Use Illusion/Phantasm mage spells (+3); Must be of True Neutral alignment (-1); TOTAL MODIFIER: +7.5.

Table 6: AJATHAR’S EXPERIENCE TABLE & SPELLS

Illusion/Phantasm Spells											
Level	Experience	Hit Dice	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
2	1,500	2d4	2								
3	3,000	3d4	2	1							
4	6,000	4d4	2	2							
5	15,000	5d4	3	2							
6	30,000	6d4	3	2	1						
7	60,000	7d4	3	2	2						

8	112,500	8d4	3	3	2		
9	210,000	9d4	3	3	2	1	
10	435,000	9d4+1	3	3	2	2	
11	660,000	9d4+2	3	3	3	2	
12	885,000	9d4+3	3	3	3	2	1

+225,000 XP per level thereafter

+1 hp per level thereafter

Spell progression continues with the same pattern, up to a maximum of three spells per level, up to 9th level (if the character's intelligence permits it).

Thief Skills: Bluehand has the skills Climb Walls, Find/Remove Traps, Open Locks, Move Silently and Hide in Shadows. His base chance of success with any of these abilities is determined by Table 19, Thief Average Ability Table, in the *Dungeon Master's Guide*.

Spell Casting: Without a regular mentor, Bluehand's development of his illusionist talent was stunted. He advances in spell use much more slowly than a true mage of comparable level, and may only use spells from the Illusion/Phantasm school of magic. He must check to see if he can learn a spell, and must study spells in order to cast them, just like a mage. He does not receive spells automatically when he gains a new level; he must find or steal books or scrolls with new spells, or must hire an illusionist to share them with him.

Adventure Suggestion

A mysterious lone wolf, freelance thief has struck the characters' neighborhood, leaving his trademark blue hand symbol at the scene of each crime. He is very successful, and has overshadowed many of the local guild's best thieves, on their own territory. The player characters (presumably connected with the guild) are commanded by their guildmaster to track down this unauthorized thief, either to coerce him to join the guild or to leave the city, or if necessary, eliminate him.

The thief is, of course, "Bluehand" Ajathar. The characters may be very surprised to find themselves up against this strange, illusion-casting thief. Ajathar's description and level should be fleshed out suitably to challenge the character party.

Glossary of Thief Slang

Box-Man: Strictly speaking, a thief specialized in cracking safes.

Burn: To underreport the take in a job to one's partners. "Luigi burned us. He told us there were only three diamonds, and kept two for himself."

Cannon: Pickpocket, cutpurse.

Contraband: Illegal goods (stolen or prohibited by local law).

Fencing: Selling stolen goods. "We stole the duke's jewels and fenced them later the same night."

The Fix: Ties with corrupt officials to have criminal charges "fixed"—that is, thrown out. This will usually require bribes or favors.

General Subscription: Money collected from the local underworld to free a captured thief by bribing officials.

Hit Man: Assassin; an "executioner" for crime bosses, paid to kill their enemies.

Lone Wolf: A solitary, independent thief. He is probably self-taught and not allied with a guild.

Made-Guy: A burglar who is in good standing with the local thieves' guild; a guildsman.

Mark: The target of a confidence game. "We have to bring the mark to the Burnt Goose Tavern."

Mob: A group of thieves.

Pennyweighter: a thief who operates by replacing valuable items (especially jewelry) with worthless ones.

Piece Man: Someone who trades knowledge on where stolen property can be sold.

Pigeon: Victim of a con or swindle.

Pigeon Plucker: swindler, con artist.

Racket: Any sort of larceny, from pickpocketing and burglary through embezzlement.

Rootin': Committing crimes.

Roper: Someone who pulls in a mark for a con.

Rounder: A good, professional burglar.

Score: Loot from a theft. "We got a good score from the duke."

Squeal: To identify one's partners to the local authorities, usually in return for a lighter penalty for one's own crimes.

Tipster: Someone who has knowledge to share with burglars about good targets.

Chapter 4: Thieves' Guild

What is a Thieves' Guild anyway?

This is going to be answered in heaps of useful detail in this section. But it's useful to have a basic working idea to start with. A thieves' guild is a grouping of thieves who agree to work together, in at least some ways. Often because of external threat and danger, it makes better sense for them to cooperate a little. This group typically has a leader—a guildmaster—or maybe a small ruling council. It has laws by which members must abide; there can be many of these, or few. A guild will usually only exist in a reasonably-sized town or city, where there is enough work for thieves. It will usually also have a central meeting-place, almost always secret; this is usually referred to as the guild house. Finally, it's also usually true that the large majority of these thieves are not of good alignment—they tend towards neutrality at least, if not towards actual evil.

Developing the Thieves' Guild

This chapter sets out to understand first what benefits a PC thief will derive from membership in a thieves' guild, and what responsibilities and duties he will have in return. This is a good place to start, for two reasons. First, it briefs the DM on luring the PC into guild membership so that instead of being onerous, it becomes interesting and rewarding. Dragooning a PC thief into guild membership isn't as good as the lure of the carrot (with the threat of the stick in the background . . .). Second, in looking at the "rights and responsibilities" guild members have, many of the functions of the thieves' guild—its *raisons d'être*—become clear in the process. This helps to show why such guilds exist.

This matter—what thieves' guilds do—is developed further in the next major section. The activities of the guild are divided into core functions—what almost all guilds will do—and secondary ones. Secondary functions may be carried out or wholly avoided, depending on the guild in question. These various activities are laid out for the DM here to make guild-designing easier later on. Players may also get ideas for sneaky and nefarious behaviors for their PCs here. Many "secondary functions" will relate to the specialized thief kits presented earlier. This section does not make explicit use of these kits, since different DMs will wish to handle these differently. However, developing

specialist NPCs to fulfill these specialized activities is greatly facilitated by using the kits.

Next, the relation of a thieves' guild with other groups is considered. These can vary from minimal to very highly organized indeed. The DM is briefed on major associations (with merchants, the law, other guilds) and the general social background to thief activities.

Immediately before the section on designing guilds, there is the crucial issue of the power at the top of the guild. This is usually the Guildmaster—or maybe a small group of dominant thieves, a ruling council. The personalities involved here will have a major effect on the personality of the guild, and need careful design by the DM.

An extensive design section, complete with play-aid record sheets, is then provided to enable the DM to develop a thieves' guild for the major urban setting(s) in his campaign. This section uses a flexible approach to guild design. That is, there are tables which can be used for random determination of aspects of guilds, and dice-rolling alone will generate workable guild structures. However, the DM is encouraged to use a guided-semirandom approach, tailoring or omitting certain dice rolls and choosing design options which produce the most suitable and pleasing overall picture. This also covers the possibility that there is no formal thieves' guild, with design options for very loose affiliations or even relative anarchy!

An example, the thieves' guild of Mallain, shows how to use the design system. This example takes an apparently contradictory set of dice rolls, and shows how to resolve them; the result is that the intrigues and tensions in the resulting Guild structure can be a focus for adventures for any PCs. The Guild becomes far more than just an anonymous body a thief PC pays dues to!

A short section on unusual thieves' guilds (travellers on the road and others such) is followed by a valuable DM resource, a section on handling PC Guildmasters. The straightforward system laid out here handles guild income, hassles, arrests, trials and tribulations, followers arriving and leaving, morale, and the day-to-day business of running a thieves' guild. This should make life a lot easier for the DM!

A small number of selected "blueprint profiles" for major NPCs within a guild follow; the DM can use these unchanged in game play or modify them as he wishes.

Benefits of Guild Membership

"What do I get out of it?" is a reasonable enough query from a player with a PC thief when told his character must join a guild, or if it is strongly suggested as a wise option by the DM. By answering the question, many of the functions of the thieves' guild which benefit its members become clear. Below are detailed the most common benefits gained, although these will vary from guild to guild, with an example of one additional benefit typical only of membership in a certain kind of guild—a highly organized and resourceful one!

It is not the case that every guild will provide all the benefits listed below, but certainly almost all guilds will provide training, access to necessary equipment, and the like.

Training

The *Dungeon Master's Guide* gives training (to gain experience levels) as an option for DMs. There is much to recommend training as a necessity for level gains. Having a PC train with a master, mentor, or tutor—probably with others of his profession around—allows many, many things to happen naturally without their obviously being spoonfed by the DM. Rumors and news can be caught up on. Hints and tips (e.g., concerning the usefulness of some of the new equipment items

reviewed elsewhere) can be exchanged. New friends and contacts can be made. Intrigues and scams can be plotted, gossiped about, and initiated; employment can be offered; schisms and factions within the guild can become a focus for adventuring. All this is just for starters. Training is a natural way for the DM to enrich the game in all sorts of ways.

Second, while certain skill gains can be seen as the result of practice, this does not apply to all the advances experience brings. New weapon and nonweapon proficiencies are the most obvious example. How can a thief who has never used a short sword, for example (because he has not previously been proficient with it), suddenly develop a proficiency in its use without training? This is obviously wholly unrealistic. How can a thief learn an Etiquette proficiency, enabling him to pull scams on the rich and haughty more easily, without a tutor to coach him in upper-crust, high society ways? He sure can't learn Etiquette from a dungeon crawl or wilderness hike! Likewise, if the player chooses to pile most of the 30 "skill points" gained for a level into one or two skills only, the PC could well need a specialist tutor to coach him in these skills—a good way to bring in one or two of the specialist thief kits as NPCs, too.

So, training is an important element of the game, and the thieves' guild is the place where the PC thief will have the best chance of finding a tutor to train him. He may have to wait a week or two, or maybe a little longer if the DM wishes this, but by and large the guild will go to some lengths to make tutors available.

Equipment

This is a major advantage for a thieves' guild member. It goes without saying that many items of use to a thief are hardly available on the open market in almost any society! Armor and weapons can be had, and likewise straightforward items such as ropes, iron spikes, crowbars, and the like. But where does the thief get lockpicks, tiger's claws, razor rings, silenced armor, and suchlike? From the thieves' guild, of course.

In addition to being a source of equipment for sale (and possibly even for loan), here is an obvious chance for role-playing possibilities. The "blueprint profile" for the Thieves Quartermaster (later in this chapter) shows how a simple trip to buy some new lockpicks at the guild can be turned into an encounter with a very resourceful and entertaining NPC, one the player of the thief PC won't forget!

In some powerful guilds, magical items may be available for exchange (for other magical items, obviously ones of superior value!) or even possibly for loan (with a fat deposit securing the item). Loaning allows thief PCs to enjoy having a magical item without the DM letting them have it permanently! It should go without saying that absconding with the item will lead to relentless and murderous pursuits until the item is returned.

Information

The thieves' guild will make it its business to know about many things which are of interest to its members, and that can mean just about anything, so a few examples are given here:

Security: The blueprints for sewer networks (allowing ingress and egress through manhole covers), times of changing guards at major guarded buildings (the Treasury, the Mint, etc.), times of watch patrols (in rich residential areas), the nature and positions of guards (warriors, dogs, etc.) and traps in key buildings, and the like.

Commercial: Who is richer than he looks (and why and how), arrivals and departures of valuable cargoes and items, where certain valuables are cached, hidden, disguised; and more in this vein.

Friends and Enemies: This will depend in a big way on the relationship of the guild with other associations, dealt with later. Sometimes such information will be given to a novice thief for obvious reasons; “do not rob merchants X, Y, Z or else. Understand?” (reasons—X and Y pay protection money and Z is actually Deputy Guildmaster; the novice might be told some of this). But other possibilities include which corrupt officers of the law are in the pockets of the guild (and therefore should not be dealt with too harshly during a robbery), which servants of the rich are very happy to talk for what magnitude of bribe, which barmen in the rough taverns in the docks will help thieves (e.g., by putting a little something in someone’s drink so they can be “helped home” by the thief later), and so on.

General Information: This is a catch-all category. To take but one possible illustrative example: a guild might keep records of legal punishments for various thievery crimes in neighboring (maybe even distant) locations (“Over there? Not if you value your hands, brother!”). These may not always be accurate and up-to-date, of course.

What the guild knows, who within the guild knows it, and whether they will tell what they know obviously depends on how “hot” the information is, the seniority of the person inquiring, and other factors. These complications don’t need our attention now; the important thing is the basic idea here, that the guild is a vital information source. And, to anticipate the responsibilities guild members have to the guild, this is a two-way process. The thief will be expected to report certain information to the guild seniors! This is dealt with later.

Fencing

This is an often-overlooked aspect of the thieves’ guild. A PC thief may steal all kinds of things which he hasn’t any idea about, so far as their price goes. He didn’t find the hidden safe in the merchant’s house, so out he comes with a bag containing a jade statuette of a cat (actually imitation jade so it’s mostly worthless), a crystal vase (exceptional elfin work, worth a fair sum), a crude wooden idol (an antique, and thus worth far more than the thief thinks), and more . . . Indeed, in the absence of any special nonweapon proficiencies (such as Gem-cutting and the like) the thief may often have little idea how much nonmonetary treasures he has stolen are worth. Even with the Appraising proficiency, the thief’s estimates may often be wrong, and a fair proportion of items too unusual or singular for the thief to be sure anyway. This is one area where the fence can help the thief.

A resourceful thieves’ guild will have members who can accurately value different sorts of items, and will also have contacts with certain specialists who aren’t actually thieves but who also aren’t terribly ethical either. They can handle real rarities. The Fence thief kit gives a basic design option for fences, and the blueprint profile section (later in this chapter) also details a highly experienced and versatile fence who can be used straight off the page (as it were) or developed by the DM for use in his campaign.

A special case is that of magical treasure. A simple *detect magic* spell from a mage-thief specialist in the guild, working with the fence, can tell a thief that the nice gold signet ring he filched from the drunk fighter is a magic item, worth far, far more than its value as gold. The same NPC can tell the thief (from an *identify* spell) that the ring is a *ring of protection* +2, worth thousands. This only needs a 1st-level magic-user with the fence, but it’s a priceless service for the thief!

The other role for the fence, obviously, is that the thief gets “hot” property off his hands quickly. It will probably be out of town very fast, to be sold in some distant location where its illicit nature will not be suspected. Obviously, fences never pay more than a fraction of the market price for goods; but

a fraction may still be a fair sum, and the thief runs no risk of being apprehended.

Specialist Help

Obviously, the fence is a form of specialist help, but the guild can also act to put members in touch with specialists to help them with certain ventures in more direct ways.

First, certain guild members will be specialists in themselves—expert lockpickers with exceptional Open Locks skill levels and others such. Multi-class thieves are also important people for many jobs—a mage-thief with such spells as *invisibility*, *levitate*, and *knock* (to consider but second-level spells) is of obvious value. Having one accompany a thief on a robbery increases the chances for success considerably, but even if this isn't possible, a simple *invisibility* spell precast on the hopeful robber gives an important edge for sneaking past guards and the like.

Then again, other adventurers might be called upon. Depending on the guild's relations with other bodies, a cleric (with *find traps*, among other spells) would be a most useful accomplice for many tasks. If the DM's campaign world has a deity which is an obvious patron for thieves (such as Olidammara of Oerth, or Mask of the Forgotten Realms), clerics of such a deity might well have very cordial relations with a thieves' guild. This is considered in more detail below.

The guild can thus act as a clearing-house, with names and meeting places to assist a PC thief hoping to pull a job but needing help. Again, whether these contacts actually agree to help will depend on many things—notably the reputation of the PC thief! However, the fact that they are there at all can be helpful for the PC thief, possibly for his friends as well, and can be very useful indeed if the thief PC wants to pull some job away from the rest of his usual adventuring group, when he must have some such extra help for success.

Of course, a thief may simply need the assistance of others of his own kind for some job he has planned. This may be a simple decoy person to help with pickpocketing in the streets, or an eagle-eyed lookout for a warehouse job. Either way, the guildhouse may be a better bet than hanging around dubious taverns and hostelryes. The flipside of this, of course, is that an impoverished PC can hang around the guildhouse touting for offers of work himself!

Finally, a well-organized guild will even be able to help its members if they get into serious difficulties. A jailer may be bribed, a magistrate bribed or blackmailed, a man of law paid to plead the thief's case in the courts (if the judge or magistrate cannot be bribed). If the captured thief is very senior in the Guild, even a commando-style "liberation" may be possible! Such actions will leave the thief indebted to his guild for some time to come . . .

So, these are the main functions of the thieves' guild, as far as a PC thief entering the guild can see them. There are certainly other things the guild will do, and we'll look at them in due course. Before that, let's look at the other side of the coin—the responsibilities the thief has to the guild. For all the advantages, what does the guildmember have to pay one way or another?

Responsibilities of Guild Membership

Guild Dues

The most obvious responsibility is that the guild member must pay dues to the guild. These will be variable. One guild may include training costs in the basic dues, which will then be fairly high; another guild might not, charging for training as and when the guild member needs it, so their basic dues will be that much lower. Of course, if the DM doesn't use training rules in his game then this element will be absent. When the DM comes to design a thieves' guild using the system outlined

later, this is a important element to consider!

In addition to a basic membership due, the guild may insist on taking a certain percentage cut of the rewards the guild member gains from his thieving activities. Here, it is likely that there will be a “basic rate” for normal operations, with guild seniors considering special cases individually. For example, if the guild provided the thief with certain important information which made a big difference (and indeed without which a robbery would have been unsuccessful), the guild may take a larger slice of the goodies than normal. What cut the guild takes will again be variable. Some guilds may discount the yearly dues (possibly in part) from later cuts from income.

Secrecy

This is just as important as paying dues. The guild member will be expected to keep the identity of the guildmaster (if he knows it), the guildhouse, and planned guild activities secret from outsiders. He must never inform on a guild member.

In a guild dominated by a lawfully-aligned guildmaster or group, secrecy may be the most important of all commitments the guildmember has to make. Some form of oath of loyalty is very likely to be demanded of the novice in almost any thieves’ guild.

Providing Information

There are two quite specific ways in which a thief will be expected to supply his seniors within the guild with information. First, information concerning his own plans; second, general information possibly of value to guild members.

A thief will be expected to keep the guild informed about important ventures he has planned. This does not include dungeon-bashing, wilderness adventures, and the like! Rather, robberies and break-ins which may net particularly good rewards or strike at “sensitive” targets (such as a temple, or the warehouse of a notable merchant), particularly nefarious crimes such as kidnapping, and major scams are examples of crimes which a thief will always be expected to notify the guild seniors or guildmaster of. Many guilds will insist that such major crimes can only be committed with the guildmaster’s permission. This is especially likely to be true with a strong guild, and in a lawful or repressive society where such actions may stir up a hornet’s nest of trouble for the guild.

Feeding back general information to the guild will also keep a thief in good standing with his fellows. A thief casing a joint for a later break-in might see an unusual number of guards around in the courtyard of an adjacent building as some crates are being taken inside from a wagon, and one crate splits slightly at the top revealing the glint of gold or ivory in the bright sun . . . The thief knows that he cannot organize a robbery over there as well as in the place he’s casing already, so he reports the pleasant view to the guild. Doing so will certainly keep the thief in good favor. The thief will be expected to provide such information should he come across it, but the guildmaster might well reward particularly helpful guild members, mark them for promotion, give them a sinecure role in some other guild job, pay a small percentage of the guild take to the helpful informant, and the like.

Snitches: These can be of special importance to a thieves’ guild. Basically, a snitch is someone paid to provide “inside information.” A snitch can be a corrupt officer of the law, a valet or servant of a rich man (or at a club of some kind), a nightwatchman, and so on.

A few guilds might insist that only the very senior guild members can have their own snitches; juniors must turn over promising contacts who could be developed into snitches to the guild. More likely, though, is that individual members can have their own snitches who are regarded as sacrosanct

by other guild members. A guildsman does not tamper with another thief's pet snitch! This is obviously going to be easiest if the identities of the snitches are actually commonly known within the guild—how can you not poach a snitch if you don't know who is one, after all? But, because some thieves may be very nervous about this, the identity of certain really important snitches may be kept secret. The guild will protect them by warning thieves away from the key snitches indirectly (e.g., with an edict that no one is to try to “make friends” with the staff of such-and-such an establishment). This does not make the identity of the snitch known, but serves to warn other thieves away.

Limited Territory

The thief will almost certainly be told that certain areas and activities are definitely off-limits. This is likeliest to apply to major crimes and big heists when junior thieves are the hopeful plotters (the guild is unlikely to allow such inexperienced people the chance to bring the wrath of the law down on everyone's head). But territorial restrictions may be just as important.

The simplest form of this is that certain thieves will have their “own patch”. Pickpockets are the most clear-cut example. A notably busy thoroughfare, one where merchants and (especially) foreigners throng, is a patch which a skilled group of pickpockets will fight determinedly to keep as their own, exclusive territory. Protection rackets are another obvious case of a demarcated territory where other guild members do not stick their noses in. These will include warehouses and offices and homes which are off-limits to burglars, because their owners pay a sum to the guild to avoid being robbed.

A more complex example of this is where sub-guilds control definite sections of a city and expect that only their own people are usually allowed any activity at all within that section. Exceptions are allowed only after careful consideration by the leader(s) of this group. This situation may happen if a guildmaster is weak and the second-rankers start carving out territory for themselves, but it might arise for simple reasons of historical accident (in a walled city with major internal divisions, gates between town quarters, and so on—the City of Greyhawk is an example). At its most extreme, a city might in effect (if not in name) have several thieves' guilds, each controlling one section or quarter of the city, with the boss of each splinter faction meeting with the others at regular times to try to coordinate efforts and defuse tensions.

Other Duties

Depending on the individual guild, the thief may have other responsibilities. These can vary considerably, but some of the more common cases are detailed here.

Training: The thief may only be allowed to train apprentices of his own with the knowledge and permission of the guild, and the guild will probably want a cut of the training fee. Some guilds will regulate the allocating of apprentices to trainers. In busy times when the guild is expanding, mid-level thieves may have to give up a certain amount of time, demanded by the guild, to train new apprentices.

Legwork: Especially with apprentices and low-level thieves, the guild may require them to do some of the tedious day-to-day legwork, at least as backup reserves. This can involve collecting money from the victims of protection rackets, collecting and carrying bags of small change from illegal street gambling, acting as a messenger boy, keeping a part-watch on a warehouse, and so on. This shouldn't be too oppressive, but a sudden need for extra help on the part of the guild is a nice plot device for keeping a thief PC in town and maybe having him see things, and meet people, that widen the scope of his future adventuring.

The Recalcitrant PC Thief

A player may decide that he doesn't want to have his thief PC join any guild; this may be especially likely with Chaotic characters (and Chaotic players!). It's best not to pressure the player in this case, but as his thief PC gains experience he will inevitably tread on the toes of the thieves' guild (e.g., by robbing someone they have an "understanding" with). The guild will sooner or later have to take action against the PC thief. They will warn him first, and stress the benefits of joining (as explained above). Eventually he will have to join up, or ship out. There is also the matter of training, of course; if he doesn't get this from the guild, where else can he come by it?

Some players may worry that their thief PCs may have their freedom of action massively curtailed, or their alignment may be compromised (especially if the PC is of Good alignment), or their PC may simply be ripped off. These are legitimate worries, and some players may want to be reassured about them. The DM should be able to lure all but the most uncooperative player into guild membership without any strong-arm tactics, and then the full plethora of the guild's nefarious activities can be unfolded . . .

Activities of Thieves' Guilds

There are certain obvious core activities of thieves which will always be a staple of guild goings-on, but there are also more uncommon activities which not all guilds will have dealings with. Looking at the range of possible guild activities is done here for two reasons. First, it is a useful precursor to guild design, to come later. Second, it is a natural lead-in to the issue of relations which exist between thieves' guilds and other groups. Since these are often based on mutual interests and spheres of activity, it makes sense to consider these interests and activities first, to make sense of the associations to be reviewed later!

Importantly, the activities reviewed here do not involve all the thieves of the Guild. If PC Guildmembers find some activities run by a guild objectionable (e.g., because they are good-aligned), they shouldn't be forced to do so. The idea here is simply to give an idea of the range of activities which guilds may be involved with on more than an occasional basis.

Core Activities

These are the bread-and-butter activities of thieves. Virtually any guild will have these as everyday activities. That is, guild members will regularly indulge in them and they will provide much of the "bread and butter" income for most thieves (especially lower-level thieves).

Pickpocketing, burglary, robbery, street theft, street gambling, and mugging are the most obvious core activities. There's little need to say much more about them here. Almost all players will have had their thieves indulge in such behaviors, and will be familiar with them. Standard AD&D® game rules, and many equipment items and Thief Kits presented in this volume, give exhaustive detail about them.

Other Activities

The DM can look upon the listing here as a menu from which choices can be made later on when designing a thieves' guild. The list isn't exhaustive; devious DMs can no doubt add to it for unusual guilds in a campaign setting. The activities here are ones which will involve the guild as a body, or

many of its members, on a systematic basis. In turn, this will affect the nature of the guild significantly. Obviously, many of the activities listed below may involve specialists, and the thieves' kits outlined earlier can be very useful in many cases.

Protection Rackets

Thieves and merchants may possibly come to some negotiated understanding, in certain cities and towns. The thieves will agree not to burgle particular establishments (warehouses and private homes)—that is, those which belong to the merchants who pay a fee for this privilege. Merchants who don't pay will be fair game for future robbery, and may be specifically targeted.

This kind of agreement will always be negotiated by the guild seniors, and guild members will be told in no uncertain terms that certain places are strictly off-limits in the future. Such agreements are most likely in places where the thieves' guild is strong, the rule of law is fairly weak (or corrupt), and where the guildmaster is a lawful-aligned individual.

A notable consequence of such agreements is that if a freelance thief burgles a property which is owned by a merchant who pays the local thieves' guild, that thief can expect the thieves' guild of the town to make determined efforts to find him and administer summary justice. This may be harsher than the penalties prescribed by the law! Also, the traditional meaning of the term "protection racket"—"pay up or we break your legs"—is not exactly what is implied here, although thieves denied payment by a merchant might resort to the threat of violence to drive away the merchant's customers, staff, and the like. Only a guild dominated by evil and top-heavy with thugs will be likely to use actual violence, in most cases.

Smuggling

This is most likely to be an organized activity in a port, or possibly in a major inland trade city built on a nexus of trade roads. In the case of a port, there is a possibility that thieves might also be allied with pirates, both through smuggling and through getting messages to the pirates regarding the sailing times, cargoes, and protection of sailing vessels leaving the port. The smuggling can be of any prohibited item or items, and in troubled lands the smuggling of weapons can be particularly lucrative.

Subtle variants on this theme are possible. Consider a thieves' guild which has good connections with the rulers, in a weak country ruled by evil. The country might officially outlaw slavery (for fear of offending neighboring countries which are not ruled by evil), while the thieves actually carry this on as a subterfuge activity, smuggling slaves into and perhaps through the country. This is done with the full knowledge and connivance of the rulers, who take a percentage of the profits. Selling the slaves to another, more distant, evil land could raise plenty of funds for the thieves and the rulers. In time, this evil land could flourish and become strong on the profits of its wicked trade.

Forgery and Coin Clipping

A strong thieves' guild may regulate the activities of forgers and "clippers", to keep the proportion of forgeries and clippings within reasonable limits. If there are too many forgeries floating around, the value of coin will sharply deteriorate, to no one's benefit (including the thieves). Clipping is simply the art of shaving fine slivers from the edges of coins and using the salvaged metal for subsequent coin-forging or for other purposes. A shaved-off margin of some 5% from the original is usually fairly undetectable, but coins may be clipped several times during their lifetime! In advanced

societies in the campaign world, the dies used to make coins may have milled or marked edges to prevent clipping.

Entertainments

This is a catchall term for a fairly wide range of dubious behavior. Some examples of systematic operations which a thieves' guild might run are listed below.

Gambling: Thieves might well run casinos and similar establishments. These provide a source of income, a good meeting-place for underworld people, and the opportunity to rip off large sums of money from patrons who are rich, drunk, stupid or usually all three. Organized crime will be strongly involved in these operations.

Good Time Girls: Nothing much needs to be said about this, save that thieves often act as the "gentleman companions" of these girls. There is a much shorter word to describe this, of course.

Bawds: A bawd is a character who knows the seamier side of life, and makes an in-demand "tourist guide" for the rich and bored (or the foreigner) who seek to stimulate their jaded appetites in the seedy parts of town. Bawds will often be freelancers, but they may hand over a certain percentage of their clients to muggers and other thieves. This type of activity might well involve the thieves' guild, even though the bawds themselves do their own work independently, and will frequently be Chaotic Evil in alignment.

Lawful Operations

A thieves' guild might actually turn to actions which do not conflict with the rule of law for several reasons. First, it might have many lawful members (this is implausible except in a very lawful society). Second, it might have strong contacts with some outside group which makes some lawful operation a special case—having good relations with merchants could lead to the protection scenario detailed below. Third, it might just be good public relations. The guild does some "legal work" to maintain a veneer of public respectability while blaming its really nefarious activities (kidnapping, drug smuggling, etc.) on rogue elements outside the guild. It might also be a temporary diversion to keep the heat off when the guild has over-reached itself or been blamed for some particularly spectacular heist or wicked crime. Surprisingly, there are lots of reasons why poachers may turn gamekeeper for a while. Two examples are:

Security testing: Thieves might be employed to test defenses of a secure area. Who better, after all? Gemcutters and jewelers, pawnbrokers, and rich merchants who keep a lot of money around are obvious potential customers. Equally obviously, they won't approach the thieves' guild unless they already have some understanding with them. They will also top up the defenses after the thieves have tested the first set, even if the thieves say the defenses are very sound (or maybe especially if they claim this!).

Of course, if freelance good-aligned (or lawful-aligned) specialists in such work are available as independents, they will be the most likely to carry out this work. A thieves' guild is likely to go to great lengths to get these people to join the guild, or else to eliminate them!

Transportation: Sometimes, someone wishes to move something (a fabulously valuable gem, a religious icon, etc.) from one place to another by normal means (e.g., not teleporting) and is fearful that it may be stolen en route. Thieves are employed to create decoys and diversions and to smuggle the object in secrecy. Since thieves are masters of concealment, and also know a thing or two about stealing things in transit, their skills will be put to good use here. In the case of a really important item being transported, a thief might be asked to submit to a spell such as *quest/geas* to ensure his

cooperation.

Thieves' Guilds in the Campaign World

A thieves' guild doesn't exist in a vacuum. It will be strongly influenced by the society which it is part of. Considering this is an important backdrop to the more specific matter of how a thieves' guild gets on with other associations and groups.

Size and Wealth of Communities

A first simple point is that a thieves' guild has to have enough work to support it! A small hamlet of 50 or so peasant farmers, most of whom are desperately poor, wouldn't support a single cutpurse, let alone a thieves' guild. A busy working town along a trade route, though, might well attract several thieves, even if the actual population was fairly low. If the village relied on monies passing through the place (coaching inns, hospitality, markets, etc.), it would be much richer in terms of money available for the thieves to filch than a place with the same population but dependent on the turnip harvest! In the design process, some specific rules for determining how many thieves various communities can support are given.

Social Alignment

The other factor which will always be of importance in determining the nature of a thieves' guild is the dominant social alignment (see the *Dungeon Master's Guide*, Chapter Four). Usually this will be reflected in the alignment of the rulers too, but this may not always be so: the possibility of a "divided alignment" society is discussed after the social alignments have been considered. Also, the following descriptions are tendencies, not absolutes. The final paragraphs on Special Social Factors shows how, for example, two Lawful Good societies dominated by different religions could have a very different view on thieves!

Lawful Good

Thievery will be strongly disapproved of—thieving is by definition unlawful, and few thieves are good. The penalties for thievery will be harsh, but will usually involve banishment, confiscation of goods, and long sentences of socially useful labor rather than death, mutilation (e.g., amputation of a hand) or such other cruel treatment. Lawful good rulers may go to some lengths to extirpate thieves' guilds, and lawful good people will certainly inform on thieves. There will be a strong sense of civic duty among such people to report any observations suggestive of thievery to the authorities. Tip for thieves: Find somewhere else.

Neutral Good

Thievery will not be disapproved of in the same way as in a lawful society, but thieves are rarely good, and neutral good societies are unlikely to have much regard for them. However, punishment for thievery may not be so severe, and the rulers may feel there are better things to do, and more important social priorities, than persecuting thieves. Assassins, for example, will be rated a much more important target for the authorities.

However, while the authorities (and society generally) may tolerate a certain level of thievery, there

is likely to be a “threshold level” above which thieving will no longer be tolerated. Over-powerful thieves may be deemed a major social evil, and neutral good societies may be less fussy about the means (neutral) taken to achieve the ends (good). Do not forget that a viable interpretation of the neutral good philosophy is “war on evil without remittance or mercy,” such that only direly evil ends will be eschewed in the prosecution of good! Certainly, plants, spies, moles within guilds—all may be used by the authorities against over-powerful thieves. Tip for thieves: Keep a low profile and you can get away with it, but otherwise—watch out!

Chaotic Good

Such societies do not often have effective, strong law enforcement, because the people prize personal freedom as a primary virtue. For this reason, thieves’ guilds can grow strong in a Chaotic Good society. Even if the will is there to do something about the thieves, the means may not be adequate to the task.

The attitudes of ordinary people will be complex here. Some may regard thieves in a heroic light, as individualists and nonconformists, and be positively disposed to them. Others will regard thieves as taking the fruits of the labors of others away, and that this curtails personal freedoms—the undeservedly poor have not the freedom they should have. Reactions will tend to be individualistic (as with most Chaotic societies) and somewhat unpredictable. Tip for thieves: Stick around!

Lawful Neutral

This may be the most intolerant of all societies. Thievery is the very antithesis of law, and punishments for transgression are likely to be harsher and more cruel and unforgiving (e.g., amputation of a hand, a long sentence of forced labor) than in a Lawful Good society. Lawful Neutral rulers are likely to be rather stern, and worst of all, law enforcers are likely to be as numerous and unbribable here as anywhere. The only bonus for the thief is that Lawful Neutral societies are appallingly bureaucratic and its civil servants lacking in imagination and initiative.

Lawful Neutral citizens will snitch on a thief at the drop of a hat and, moreover, will do so out of a sense of real civic duty. Tip for the thief: Very dangerous, but definitely outsmartable. Faked papers and the like go a long way, and fast talking helps a great deal.

Neutral

Absolute Neutral rulers tend to be rare, except in countries which border on extreme alignment societies. Here, performing some kind of balancing act may be the only way to survive. Such rulers will probably ignore thievery unless it gets out of hand; they will have too much else to worry about. When it does get out of hand, their instinct will be to take whatever steps are necessary to restore the balance—more militia, more watch, more nightwatchmen and lamplighters in the streets, and so on. They will be highly pragmatic in their response.

While pure Neutral rulers may be rare, ordinary people will often be of this alignment. This reflects the fact that they aren’t clearly of any other alignment: They’re just pragmatic, doing what they need to get by day to day. Most medieval societies were hardly rich; even the “middle class” (until the 15th century in Europe) had a standard of living which could barely be termed comfortable. Survival is the name of the game, and clearly demarcated principles often go to the wall under such circumstances. The resulting blurred alignment can often be summarized as Neutral. Neutrals will tend to regard thievery as something they can’t do a great deal about; thieves are mysterious, danger-

ous people with secret organizations. Neutrals look the other way; they don't want to get involved. Corruption can operate on a wide scale—it can even become a staple of commercial exchange. Tip for thieves: Good pickings!

Chaotic Neutral

Almost no societies, save for disorganized anarchies and some frontier lands, are dominated by this alignment. A Chaotic Neutral ruler is unlikely to survive for any time at all—ruled by whim and caprice, his subjects will likely rise up to put an end to such arbitrary rule.

Such societies, or ones comprised of Chaotic Neutral people, will likely not care a fig about thievery. Gambling, corruption, bawdery, muggings, and lowlife are likely to flourish in such societies, and thieves may grow very strong organizing such activities. Tip for thieves: Excellent pickings, and a strong guild can effectively rule such a society behind the scenes.

Lawful Evil

While, like all Lawful societies, Lawful Evil will not care for unlawful acts, Lawful Evil accepts what is necessary to maintain the strong in power. Fear rules here. If a Lawful Evil ruler uses thieves to backstab (literally!) his enemies, so be it. The ordinary people will cower if a thief swaggers around—providing that thief has the muscle to back any threats he makes. Thieves' guilds in such lands may be very strong, but they must have an emphasis on the brutal and thuggish to survive. Assassins will be stronger than thieves here, and the two may work closely together. Tip for thieves: Walk loudly and carry a big stick.

Neutral Evil

Neutral Evil is uncaring and unconcerned. Such people—rulers or ordinary folk—are out for what they can get. How one gets what one has in life doesn't matter at all. Neutral Evil folk are often cleverer than Lawful Evil ones, being more flexible and less respecting of a dumb “superior” just because he is in a position to push people around. They are also better organized by far than Chaotic Evil people. Neutral Evil is a flexible, smart, highly dangerous alignment.

Thieves have excellent chances here, but they will have to watch their own backs more than in any other society. Rival thieves' guilds may be particularly likely here. Since there is no stricture other than “don't get caught”, competing guilds and gang wars are highly likely. Tip for thieves: Good prospects for the pragmatic amoralist.

Chaotic Evil

Such societies are likely always to be in ferment, since the arbitrary cruelty of the rulers will drive even a passive population to revolt before long. Only Chaotic Evil societies with a powerful clerical group, demonic presence, etc., will have the sheer force needed to tyrannize for any length of time.

At all levels of a Chaotic Evil society, backstabbing and intrigue, treachery and betrayal, is the basic coin of exchange. The strong take what they want however they like, and the rest are ground into the dirt. Since organization and cooperation are minimal, a thieves' guild where the members don't spend all their time backstabbing each other can grow to dominate behind the scenes very swiftly. Tip for thieves: Trust nobody, sell your granny into slavery, and have magic items allowing a

fast exit.

Special Social Factors

There are many possible unusual social factors which will be an important backdrop to the role of thieves and their guilds in society. A few examples only are given here, since the possibilities are almost infinite.

Divided Alignments

Some societies exist where the alignment of the ruler(s) is sharply different from the general social alignment. For example, a lawful evil dictator might rule over a society mostly comprised of freedom-loving chaotics, enslaved by military might. Here, while the agents of law enforcement would have a very punitive attitude towards thieves, the common population might regard them as heroes, possibly giving shelter to a thief on the run, or at the least not giving the thief away.

Racial Divisions

Possibly the strongest antipathy between the races in many AD&D® campaigns is between elves and dwarves. This can strongly affect guild structures. In the worst case, a city might have an elven guild and a dwarven guild, both vying for humans to join their side, and with other races tending to ally one way or the other (gnomes might join dwarves, and halflings side with elves, for example). The antipathy of the two might override even alignment factors. This could break out into open warfare between the factions, or a long-running guerilla war could be the result.

Religious Factors

Not all societies with the same dominant alignment need have the same attitude toward thieves. One Lawful Good society might be dominated by priests of a god stressing mercy, forgiveness, and humility; another might be dominated by priests of a stern warrior god stressing protection, strength, and the need for justice to prevail in all circumstances. Their attitudes to thieves would be significantly different, to say the least!

Historical Factors

Thieves may be especially notorious (or maybe especially famous!) in a society for some unique historical reason. The people may speak of how brave Edrain the master thief backstabbed the wicked tyrant Baron Higsel and brought about the downfall of an evil tyranny. Hence thieves are somewhat better tolerated than elsewhere. Or they may speak of how evil Edrain the treacherous backstabber foully slew the greatly loved and wise Baron Higsel, the best ruler in the history of the land, and since this time thieves are deemed especially wicked, base, treacherous fellows and death is an automatic punishment for them! These are extremes, but the DM can easily envisage many variants on this kind of unique background.

All these general social backgrounds can easily merge into personal obsessions or idiosyncracies of rulers, in dictatorial countries. There are many idiosyncratic reasons why a particular leader might have an especially punitive or lenient (less likely!) attitude to thieves than the general social alignment might suggest, but there should always be a good reason why. For example, a paladin ruler of a

city-state might be unusually lenient toward thieves because a (Neutral Good) thief companion saved his life more than once in their adventuring days. Unlikely, admittedly, but possible! Such oddities should be thought up individually by the DM so that they fit with the campaign setting and history.

Thieves' Guilds and Other Groups

Here, we'll look at the general pattern of relationships which can hold between the thieves' guild and other social groups of importance—the law, merchants and their fellows, other guilds, and the like. The important word is “general.” The broad patterns outlined will be used later in the guild design section. They are presented now for the DM to think about in advance.

The two most important relationships thieves' guilds have will be with the people they steal most from (merchants) and the people doing their best to stop them (the officers of the law). Several possible types of relationships are outlined with each group. These are dominating themes only; checking the Complex/Mix entry at the end of each group will suggest many variations on the dominant themes.

Thieves and the Law

The alignment of the rulers of society will have a dominating effect on this relationship. However, there will be other factors of importance, too. Here is a simple example: A lawful good state is at war with a powerful, evil neighbor. Almost all of the country's resources will go into the war effort—and able-bodied men and women who might otherwise be law enforcers putting down thieves will be fighting in battles instead. Thus, thieves will find life much easier than usual in such a land. From the patterns below, some will obviously tend to align with certain alignments, and this will be reflected in the guild design process later. But nothing is ever cut and dried, and 100% predictable!

Persecution

Typical of lawful and non-good societies, officers of the law are vigilant against thieves and their guilds. They are not easily bribeable, and there may be rewards (money, medals, etc.) for watch officers arresting many thieves or busting a guild. Penalties for thievery are usually harsh. There will be very few corrupt officers of the law. Busting a captured thief from prison will be very difficult—prisons and gaols will be strongly built, heavily guarded, and tough to get into (cue for an exciting adventure here!).

Hassle

The law comes down fairly heavily on thieves, and penalties for thievery are moderately harsh. However, officers of the law may feel they have better things to do than deal with thieves (e.g., in a rough-and-tumble port city), and with petty thievery in particular, a thief may get away with handing over the spoils, paying a spot fine, and getting a gauntleted hand across the back of the head. In an odd way, the thieves may even have a sneaking regard for the law: the law is firm, but fair and not arbitrary or excessively harsh, and the thieves feel they are up against an enemy worthy of their skills.

Opposition

This is perhaps the commonest state of affairs. The officers of the law do their best to prosecute the law. However, a small number are corrupt, they don't have enough manpower, they know their chances of recovering stolen property are very low and this adversely affects morale and motivation, and so on. The lawmen aren't uncaring, they're just somewhat disillusioned and their morale isn't so good. They will perk up and make a determined effort to find out who has pulled a big heist when one takes place, and if thieves resort to real violence they will really come looking for them. Otherwise, they just go through the motions. One or two bright and enthusiastic younger officers may resent the cynicism and world-weariness of their elders, but not for long; they soon capitulate to the prevailing attitudes.

Many thieves with experience in such places have a proverb which (there are several versions) runs along the lines of, "if you get round the corner you're a free man"—that is, get away from any watch officer in the street with your pilfered gains and you won't exactly be chased with real determination.

Tolerance

The picture here might seem to be similar to opposition, but the law is still weaker in dealing with thieves. This may be for a variety of reasons. Under-funding and under-manning may be especially important. Significant corruption may be present (especially higher up the scale). The society may be chaotic or anarchic. There may be a reason why thievery is not a major worry (a weak thieves' guild, major external threats to a city-state so that most able-bodied men are in a fighting militia, a very rough port where serious assaults and worse are a much bigger headache than thieves, etc.).

In such situations, the law not only doesn't do anything about all but the most serious thievery crimes, but officers of the law may even get testy and irritated with people who complain about them too much, especially if they are foreigners!

Corruption

Here, bribes and backhanders are paid to officers of the law on a regular and major basis. Not all lawmen may be corrupt, but a thief with serious financial resources can manage to avoid being charged with almost anything. If somehow he ends up in prison, he will be smuggled out somehow. Law officers may actually be members of the thieves' guild, cooperating with smuggling, protection rackets, and the like.

There is a tendency to overplay this, and to make it too obvious to PCs. Corrupt law enforcers aren't going to advertise the fact, even in a corrupt society, save for the most stupidly sociopathic. Corruption may be extensive, but will still be significantly behind the scenes, making it more deadly for the unfortunate outsider who blunders into it. Lawfully-aligned PCs can arouse the ire (and even the violent attentions) of corrupt officers of the law they attempt to "assist" with their work!

Complex/Mix

This covers a variety of more detailed or subtle relationships. An obvious example is an opposition within the forces of law, which can be exploited by thief PCs (or by a DM with lawful PCs too). For example, in one city the dominant relationship between thieves and law officers is corruption. Senior officers, and many of the watchmen, are corrupt, and readily take bribes. A small number of decent but disillusioned juniors have tried to get firm evidence to nail their superiors and try to

eradicate the corruption, but they haven't been able to manage this yet. Objective evidence hasn't been accumulated, and witnesses are too scared to talk. There is concern that even some of the judges and magistrates are in the pockets of criminal bosses or the Guildmaster of thieves. Cue for lawful and/or good PCs to help out in a dangerous urban jungle of intrigue and treachery...

Relationships may also be mixed. Thus, in one city ward, the commander of the ward watch may be an iron-willed, ultra-lawful, dominating man who drills his men to persecute thieves night and day. In another, richer ward at the far end of the city, the inexperienced new junior leader is a follower of a kindly, somewhat impractical faith, and does not think that crime deserves stern punishment unless violence is involved. His men don't respect him, though, because of his inexperience. Morale is falling, and an increasing number of watchmen leave public service or else just don't care about enforcing the law any more. One city, two radically different sets of possibilities for thieves. There may be major tensions within a guild, as the thieves from the "tough end" of town start trying their luck uptown!

Many possibilities exist in the Complex/Mix end of the spectrum. The other themes can be mixed and varied to create many possibilities themselves. The only limit is the DM's imagination.

Thieves and Merchants

The overall wealth of a society will have an important influence on this relationship. In a poor society, merchants will not be likely to be rich, and they will not be able to afford any regular thievery. They will not be able to bear such losses without going bankrupt. Here, merchants will fight tooth and nail to minimize the depredations of thieves. In richer lands, a little "stock loss" (among other things) can be tolerated rather better.

Alignment will somewhat modify this. In chaotic and/or evil societies which are rich, merchants may be very greedy, and may take many measures against thieves out of a love of money, not out of a need to survive. There may also be an important element of pride in a society which stresses individualism (chaotic) rather than one where merchants form groups, ally with each other, and try to regulate business practices (lawful). Over-proud merchants may resent monies or goods being stolen not primarily because of the loss of value—it may be negligible—but because of the loss of face. This can be an important factor in merchants putting pressure on authorities to suppress thieves, and in their hiring PCs for sums which exceed the value of their stolen goods!

Warfare

The merchants hate and fear the thieves. They go to extreme lengths to protect their property, and many able-bodied folk get jobs as nightwatchmen. Even ordinary warehouses have traps and many secret hidey-holes, wall safes and the like, and some have magical traps as well. Merchants often have bodyguards, and they won't pay protection monies. They may even band together to form mutual "insurance policies" to help each other. The merchants exert all their political clout to get the authorities to suppress thieves. Even small-scale pilferage will result in an offender being dragged off to face the sternest justice the merchant's advocate can plead for.

Under these circumstances, the thieves' guild may react in a number of ways. It may turn to other forms of crime. It may turn to imported help to crack the merchants (more thugs for protection racketeering, more thieves for daring robberies recruited from a friendly guild from a nearby town). It may use methods such as abductions and blackmail to force its way back into a position of strength. A really powerful guild will effectively "declare war" on the merchants if it thinks that forcing a few to cave in will lead to other merchants giving in also. Many options exist. This situa-

tion is a real struggle of wills, and the life of a thief will be dangerous—but never dull.

Opposition

Somewhat like the state of affairs described above, but the merchants don't go to such lengths to protect themselves or keep thieves off their backs. They don't like thieves, they don't accept them as a part of society or a tolerable evil, but they don't go overboard about them either. Such merchants are fairly stoutly resistant to any attempt at coercion or blackmail, and they use their influence with the powers-that-be to keep life tough for thieves.

Standoff

This is a fairly common state of affairs. The merchants don't like thieves, but they are somewhat fatalistic about them. A strong element of pragmatism influences their attitudes. If it loses them less to pay protection money than to suffer the thievery they would otherwise have to tolerate, they will pay up. This is a major difference from the oppositional state, where merchants will actually suffer extra loss rather than connive with thieves.

Merchants in a standoff will do what they can to get by. Unless thievery gets wildly out of hand, they won't get up in arms, and they will pay off thieves, or accept a certain level of theft, as they must.

Submission

This is a rare case. Here, the merchants are running scared. Coercion is rife; merchants pay a lot of money to avoid being robbed or having their homes burned down. Their profits may be almost all eaten away by this. The law is of little help, usually because it is corrupt, maybe because it is ineffectual. Thieves will have many spies in the midst of the merchants. This is an unstable state of affairs; it cannot persist long. Either the commercial life of the society falls apart, or the picture changes—often to Infiltration as described below.

Infiltration

Here, thieves have so many dealings with merchants that they actually start to get involved in commerce directly. This often happens as a natural evolution from either a standoff or a submission relationship. Thieves start to become merchants. They may have been spies in merchants employ before, they may “take over” the businesses of merchants they have bankrupted or driven off, or they may enter businesses their talents suit them for (e.g., as locksmiths, gem-cutters, moneylenders, pawnbrokers, and the like).

This has several attractions for the thief. First, additional income can be produced. Second, the business can be a simple exploitation of a skill or proficiency the thief already has. Third, it can provide a good cover for a thief. Fourth, there may be a more nefarious motive or two (“Ah, sir wants a combination lock which will be absolutely thief-proof! I have just the thing . . .”; why shouldn't a locksmith have the best lockpicks in town when apprehended by the constables down a dark alleyway at night?

At its most extreme, thieves can actually come to dominate commercial life, or at least to play a major role in it. Organized crime becomes big business. The thieves may even become important figures in society, and have political power. The City of Greyhawk is one notable example of this.

Complex/Mix

Again, examples of complicated or tense, oppositional relationships can easily be developed by the DM from the examples above. One group of merchants could be trying desperately to fend off thievery, while a second faction argues for accommodating thieves and paying them off. This leads to a major schism, with the more principled merchants accusing the pragmatists of collusion with crime; insults start to fly, then a few fists, then somebody's warehouse suffers a small fire . . . Involving the PCs in what will fast become a triangular conflict (two sets of merchants at each other's throats with the thieves gleefully picking up the spoils from anyone they can get at) leads to endless adventure possibilities.

Thieves and Other Guilds

There are two guilds which are most important here: Assassins and beggars. These are dealt with separately below, as are bards. All the other guilds are dealt with in groups, below.

Craft Guilds

These are the myriad guilds of gemcutters, barbers and dentists, butchers and bakers, and so on. Thieves will not have dealings of note with many of them, but there are one or two exceptions. Pawnbrokers are an obvious possible "front" for thieves and fences, likewise moneylenders (with their safes and secure chests and the like). Thieves may thus cooperate with many such, and minimize robberies of the rest! Guilds which take young apprentices may be paid small sums for handing over to the thieves youngsters who seem to be highly dexterous and capable of developing into thieves, given suitable training. In special instances (e.g., thieves allied with seafaring smugglers), other alliances (e.g., with the seamen's guild) may be of note.

If there are unusual thief-craftsmen alliances (or oppositions), the DM should script them individually; they will need individual rationales, which should be explained and noted!

Adventuring Guilds

In some cases there may be an unusual reason why thieves are strongly opposed to (or allied with) an adventuring guild (including temples, etc.) in a city. The most notable example is a cordial alliance with clerics of a deity favoring thieves (e.g., Erevan Ilesere for half-elven and elven thieves, or Olidamarra, in Oerth; or Mask in Faerun). If some particular type of multi-class thief is common in a city for some reason, then there will obviously tend to be a stronger link between the two relevant guilds than usual. For example, if mage-thieves are common, then the Guild of Wizardry will take a definite interest in the activities of thieves. Under such conditions, the mages will probably not attract unwanted attention from light-fingered thieves (although few sane thieves try stealing from mages anyway).

But other possibilities exist. Consider a burgeoning frontier town, which is close to wild hills and forests with bountiful resources. Furs, gold from prospectors, meat from hunted animals, even some gems from a small mine; all these and more pour into the town, which grows rich and attracts many new settlers. Unfortunately, it attracts humanoids and bandits (as external threats) and many thugs and foreign cut-throats and evil thieves (as opposed to the neutral-aligned indigenous thieves). The rulers of the town grow fearful . . .

A twin alliance springs up to defend the town by stealth and cunning. Rangers patrol the distant countryside to give advance warning of marauding humanoids or bandits. Within the city, the thieves use their skills to tip off the powers-that-be about unsavory types arriving from outside, conspiring robbers and thugs, and the like (and may deal with a few of them themselves). Bandits beyond the town have spies inside it; the thieves tip the rangers off about this, and pass on intercepted messages. The thieves trade a magical shield (which they cannot use) they got from one of the thugs they dealt with to the rangers (who can use it). The rangers hand over a magical shortsword they took from a hobgoblin leader in return. Half-elven thieves and rangers share a drink together in an elven tavern, sharing the latest dwarf jokes. The two groups then save money by a joint bulk purchase of leather armor, and so it goes on . . .

Having an unusual, unexpected alliance like this spices up any adventure locale. It's well worth a DM's time to devise such a backdrop, to make a town or city unusual and particularly memorable.

Thieves and Assassins

Assassins are not a separate character class (in AD&D® 2nd Edition rules). They are simply people who are awfully good at killing other people. But the skills of the thief are valuable for this, above the natural skills of any other character class, because they are skills of stealth and sneaking about undetected. Many assassins will be thieves, multi-class thieves, or characters who began their adventuring life as thieves but then changed to another character class.

The assassin kit earlier in this volume adds detail to this natural affinity. Going further, the multi-class thief is probably the strongest option for assassins. Combining the skills of the thief with spells such as *invisibility*, *jump*, *knock*, *levitate*, *rope trick*, and *sleep*, just to consider a few low-level spells, makes for a potent assassin indeed. The fighter/mage/thief has all these advantages, of course, plus the bonus of additional hit points, and is thus an especially attractive option, although progress is slow.

So, given that many assassins are likely to be thieves, there will always be a fairly strong link between the two guilds. Cool relationships are possible if the thieves have "gone respectable" (become merchants themselves, etc.), or if the assassins are especially evil, ruthless sorts under a truly heinous guildmaster. Not unusually, though, the two will have at least moderately friendly relations. Information is quite likely to be exchanged between the two guilds, the guild seniors may meet occasionally to fraternize and discuss prospects, thieves may be paid to do spying groundwork for an assassin setting up a kill, apprentices of one guild who may be suited better to the tasks of the other may be exchanged; there are many ways the guilds can cooperate.

Thieves and Beggars

Beggars can be excellent spies. Their presence anywhere outside of the higher-class areas of cities and towns will go unmentioned, if they are seen at all. Beggars ply their trade everywhere, and some of them may just be sleeping off the effects of drink. If one is hunched up against packing boxes by a warehouse, so what? Anyway, no one wants to get too close to beggars. They have an unpleasant range of startlingly contagious diseases, and approaching them is an open invitation to lice to infest your person—just for starters. And, of course, beggars are harmless (in the sense that they are too feeble, dim-witted, drunk, etc., to cause anyone any harm). For all these reasons, well-trained beggars are a real boon to the enterprising thief. They can get into places where other people would look suspicious, they often go unnoticed, and they don't have a lot to do apart from keep their eyes peeled. Just the people to have hanging around the places a thief intends to rob. After the job,

the grateful beggars can be given a little percentage of the take.

Beggary can even be semi-professional, in large cities in particular. Dominant beggars control lucrative patches of territory, where they know that pickings are richest. Fit and able-bodied people, their senses undulled by illness or drink, can pose as beggars for a better living (in a rich city) than they can make by honest means (e.g., as farm laborers). Such people would make excellent spies. A Guild of Beggars is by no means unlikely in many city settings. And, since children make very appealing beggars as they look soulfully up from their sad little eyes and beg for a penny for a poor orphan, such a guild will find and train such rascallions. The more talented (dexterous and/or intelligent) ones may well be sold on to the thieves' guild, for a consideration, to become apprentice thieves.

Thieves and Bards

Although thieves and bards are both rogues, they have no need of extensive contacts. While bardic colleges train bards in some rogue skills which thieves also possess, this is really to be seen as part of the jack-of-all-trades range of talents the bard possesses. Bards don't think like thieves, and they don't behave like them. Perhaps the closest these two groups come to direct dealings is when a neutral evil bard becomes an assassin and the assassins' guild has good relations with the thieves' guild!

Guildmasters and Guild Structures

How a thieves' guild is organized, and how it is led, is crucial to the success of thieves in any town or city. Usually, unless there is at least some honor among thieves, life will be very hard for them!

Guild Organizations

Five basic patterns are suggested here. These will be used in later guild design. They aren't exhaustive, and some clearly shade into others. But these patterns are perhaps the commonest, and any DM can develop them to suit his campaign. One factor which isn't considered here, but which will be looked at in guild design, is how many solo operators, non-guild members, are around. This will affect the strength of the guild, but won't affect its style of organization so much.

How a guild is actually led will be dealt with straight after this section, but for now we'll assume that all guilds are led/ruled by a guildmaster. This won't always be so, but using this convention saves a lot of tediously repeated qualifiers.

Centralist

This is a strongly organized guild, where all guild members have a powerful primary loyalty to the guildmaster. Loyalty is mostly high, the guildmaster is usually a powerful and dominant figure, and the guild house is a major meeting place. Thieves from such a guild will work with a notable degree of co-ordination.

Cohesive

Again, there is a fairly strong central organization and authority. The guild is a unified body and

its rules are readily accepted by all. However, there is room for some “local latitude.” This may take the form of senior thieves below the guildmaster being able to make a few important decisions about affairs on their own patch (own quarter of the city, etc.), or the central rulership deliberately restricting the use of its authority in some cases, and so on.

Fractionated

In this case, there is a central thieves’ guild still. However, individual figures within the guild have taken power unto themselves in important ways. Local thief leaders may insist on almost complete discretion to do what they want in their areas, while agreeing not to intrude on other local leaders’ territory. Power struggles within the guild will be commonplace under these circumstances.

Oppositional

The guild has been burst asunder by tensions within it, and there may well be several competing guilds in the same town or city. This can happen because the guildmaster is weak, because of ambitious young Turks seceding from the guild, or for special reasons of many sorts (e.g., racial enmity between a guild of dwarven thieves, and one of elven and half-elven thieves, in the same town).

Relations between the different sub-guilds can vary considerably. If there is still the shell of a central guild, then the different guilds may be on fair terms still. However, at another extreme, the tensions and oppositions can degenerate into street warfare and gang assaults.

If there are, in effect, several guilds, then the DM will have to determine the organization and leadership of each one separately.

Anarchic

There is no guild organization to speak of, although there may be the remnants of a once-strong guild or perhaps a young, slowly developing guild. However, the large majority of thieves work as unregulated individuals. This may lead to a dog-eat-dog outlook with lots of backstabbing, both metaphorical and literal. However, it’s equally possible that thieves get by with individual one-to-one agreements, helping each other out as and when the need arises (this may be especially likely in a Chaotic Good society with an anarchic guild, for example). Anarchy doesn’t preclude enlightened self-interest and cooperation; it just tends to preclude this happening on a systematic and organized basis.

Complex/Mix

As usual, this covers a range of options. There may be a facade of one organization, whereas behind the scenes a quite different organization presides. It may seem that anarchy rules among the thieves of one town, but many are secretly organized behind the scenes. Or, a guild might seem to be centralist whereas in fact local leaders are hiding much of their activity from others, so that the guild is in reality fractionated. A complex situation could exist whereby the guild looks centralist at first sight, then looks fractionated (as above), and then is seen to be part of each (a couple of the strongest local leaders are secretly allied to carve up more territory while other leaders are fractionated)—a really complex option. Ample scope for DMs to develop intrigues and onion-skin puzzles here!

Guild Leaders

Clearly, how a guild is organized will influence how it is ruled (and vice versa). This is taken into account in the rules for designing and developing guilds. At this stage, we'll just consider the commonest patterns of leadership, which again can be developed by the DM as he wishes.

Guildmaster

This is by far the commonest style of leadership; the single leader. His style of leadership may vary considerably, of course. He may be a stern, harsh despot, ruling by force and fear. He can also be a kindly despot, a firm but wise ruler. He might also be a weak, querulous, but kindly leader—rather ineffectual, having lost his old strength and daring, but still smart enough to eliminate young pretenders to his rulership when he sees them preparing a bid for power. Styles of leadership will be looked at right after this section.

Council

The guild is ruled by a number of individuals, usually fairly small, who act as a central conclave, Praesidium, ruling council, or under any one of a variety of titles. This is often the equivalent of an oligarchy in government—a self-perpetuating elite, who appoint replacements from senior ranks as and when necessary to maintain or expand their number.

Democracy

Rather unusually, the rulers of the guild are elected by the guild members. This does not mean that these rulers need be weaklings, or afraid of using their powers sternly and firmly when they need to (imagine a ruler elected for a 10-year term for example!). The “elections” may be the source of notable corruption, bribery, fixing, and vote-rigging of all sorts. The devious DM can imagine dozens of ways of embroiling PCs in the kind of scandals and scams such a state of affairs will throw up!

Leaderless

This is mostly a temporary state of affairs, when the guildmaster has just died, the ruling council been arrested, and the like. However, in a very few guilds this may be a permanent state of affairs. Here, the guild will carry on only a few of the usual functions, and will primarily act only as a practical resource. Thus, the guild house will be somewhere to find a trainer, buy equipment, and gossip with fellow thieves. Guild dues will not be excessive, and they will be paid for reasons of pragmatism. However, regulation of thievery activities will be minimal or non-existent.

A leaderless guild is ripe for a coup, of course, and again this be a good option for the DM!

Complex/Mix

In this context, this means some kind of power struggle in most cases. A guildmaster may have had an ultimatum put to him by powerful seniors within the guild—accept a ruling council or else. Likewise, an ambitious and smart thief may be trying to take over a democratic guild and install himself as the undisputed leader.

Special

Because the ruler(s) of the guild are of such major importance, many DMs will be prepared to put some extra effort into designing them in some detail. For those who don't want to have to go to the trouble, the blueprint profiles (later in this chapter) can be used for guildmasters. For the more industrious, why settle for the usual option of (say) a human or half-elf guildmaster with the usual high skills and appropriate magic items, or the sourpuss old dwarf with his smelly leather armor who is the secret behind-the-scenes master thief? Guild design does include such natural racial possibilities, but there are other, more exotic, options.

The DM will always want to design these cases individually, but a few examples won't go amiss—these can be ripped off with or without DM development, or used as a spur to DM imagination.

Dragon: A dragon makes an excellent guildmaster. Some can *polymorph self* into human (half-elf, etc.) form as a natural ability, others can use the spell of the same name, others still might have a magical item permitting this change of appearance. Dragons are vain and love treasure, so what more natural than a stream of junior thieves bringing pretty treasures to the “guildmaster” as a tithe? The guildmaster can also, of course, have many charmed servants from *charm person* spells.

Deepearth Creature: Drow and Illithid are the best candidates. Appearance can be disguised with an illusion spell, the use of a mask (imagine cowed, masked thieves protecting their identities in a council meeting—a very sensible set of precautions), a *hat of disguise*, or in other ways. The guildmaster could aim at gaining wealth, power, information, all for nefarious purposes which PCs should want to stop. Combatting such a guildmaster (or even a ruling council) is an excellent introduction to deepearthing, a pleasure no player should be denied.

Extraplanar Creature: Denizens from evil planes make excellent guildmasters. They like having power, gaining information, and wealth isn't something they are wholly indifferent to. Plus they have lots of time on their hands to indulge themselves by being a thieves' guildmaster. Their powers of disguise and concealment make it easy to maintain the pretense of humanoid form.

Intelligent Monster: A troll as guildmaster is not terribly likely. But how about a beholder? efreet? rakshasa (a particularly good choice)? a faerie dragon using its many spells? There are many possibilities!

If the DM decides on a special guild ruler, there are several questions which he needs to consider:

- * Can the ruler pass itself off as a normal race? This will usually be important for retaining the loyalties of guildmembers. A spell, magical item, innate power, or plausible reason for seclusion will be needed.

- * How did the creature get to the top? Either it must have thief skills, or be able to simulate these (with spells, magical items such as *gauntlets of dexterity*, etc.), if it has worked its way up through the ranks. Or, it must have been able to replace someone at the top of the guild (through assassination, etc.).

- * Why does this creature want to be guildmaster? The possible reasons are money (tithes), information (thief spy reports), power, amusing itself (a faerie dragon, or an evil denizen with a few decades to kill), and the like.

If the DM is prepared to think through such issues, then a special ruler type can be great fun.

Guild Rulership

It's vital to know what style of rulership the guildmaster brings to the guild. This section covers

styles of rulership, and can be applied to guilds which are ruled in other ways (by councils, etc.).

Weak/Strong

This is an obvious distinction. A guildmaster can be strong and authoritative, so that his commands and rules are obeyed (willingly or otherwise). Or he may be weak, with his edicts increasingly challenged by his underlings. Factors such as Charisma, experience level, notable achievements, age, and the like will affect the guildmaster's perceived strength. The most important, however, is likely to be the general perception of the force the guildmaster has up his sleeve.

Cruel/Just

This is of most importance within the guild. The guildmaster may be cruel, handing down stiff (and sometimes arbitrary) punishments for infringements of guild rules. He may punish any signs of over-ambition among juniors very sternly. A cruel guildmaster rules his guild by fear of what he does—this is crucially different from a strong guildmaster, who may rule in part by fear of what he could do if opposed. A just guildmaster is the opposite of this, but is not weak. That is, he is known to act swiftly and decisively to oppose any enemies within the guild, and to enforce important guild rules and rulings. However, his punishments are seen as fair and justified (“he’s harsh but he’s fair”). While the opposite of cruel would, strictly, be “kindly,” nice guys do not get to be guildmasters.

Despotic/Populist

This is a rather high-sounding term for a simple dichotomy. A despotic guildmaster is one who decides on rules, punishments, policies, and important guild matters for himself. He does not consult others (much), and while he may listen to advice from his juniors he doesn't take any notice of it—he listens, he does not attend. However, this does not mean that the guildmaster is a tyrant, nor that he is cruel or even necessarily strong (a weak despot is in real trouble, however). It means that the guildmaster thinks that he knows best, and this doesn't imply wickedness or cruelty. The guildmaster may be very intelligent, wise, and far-seeing. Also, just because the guildmaster is a despot doesn't mean that the guildmembers don't like this state of affairs—a truly smart guildmaster will gain the loyalty of the guildmembers through his wisdom and the way his rulings clearly benefit the guild.

A populist guildmaster is one who goes to some lengths to listen to all (or most) opinions within the guild. He is ready to listen to advice, and may delegate some of his authority and decision-making to others within the guild. Again, this need not necessarily make the guildmaster popular. A common problem for a populist guildmaster is that he will be perceived as weak, especially if the affairs of the guild are not in good order. He may leave himself wide open to backstabbing (quite literally).

These styles of guildmaster rulership can be combined to generate individual styles, such as strong-cruel-despotic and (at the other extreme) weak-fair-populist, and all points inbetween. Combining these should be fairly straightforward for the DM, but the developed case of The Thieves' Guild of Mallain (page 76) gives an example of how to combine these different elements into an overall picture for a guildmaster's style of leadership.

Designing a Thieves' Guild

Introduction

This section covers the design of a thieves' guild. As you flesh out the details of your own guild, you'll want to record them on paper for reference during play. Following the details of the system, a worked-out example is given to show how to build up a well-detailed, atmospheric guild from the bare bones of the tables.

This section is also not just for the DM. Players can be asked by a DM to do some work for him! A player can roll up a guild for the DM to use in some other setting, or some distant city (which the PCs will visit some time later after the DM has tweaked the players' dice rolls a little!). Also, a DM can allow a player to roll up details of a guild which the PC is about to take over as guildmaster, if he trusts the player enough! There is also a special section on PC guildmasters later on.

Using the Tables

There are quite a lot of tables on the following pages. This shouldn't be intimidating; the system is detailed, not overly complicated.

Using the tables which follow can be done in more than one way. Random dice-rolling is OK, and will not give silly combinations of results. Sometimes odd-appearing combinations result, but these can often be a spur to DM creativity and generate the most interesting guilds! The DM may also ignore the dice-rolling and deliberately select results from the tables which he feels will fit his campaign needs.

The system which follows is detailed, as noted. This for DMs who like lots of detail! For those who don't, the best bet may be to combine the dice-roll and deliberate-design approaches; use dice rolls, and alter one or two when the DM especially wants some result or wants to maximize consistency. Or can't be bothered to do all the dice-rolling! Also, a few sections of design do not use tables.

Lastly, the tables mostly have suggested modifiers for basic d20 rolls. For example, the attitude of the law is determined on a d20 roll which is modified by social alignment (more hostile for Lawful societies, etc.). It is quite impossible to list all the possible modifiers for each table. This would eat up masses of space and no system can foresee all possible modifiers anyway, so only the key modifiers have been listed in each instance. The DM can easily add further modifiers as he sees fit, to reflect special circumstances.

What Isn't Covered

Some of the idiosyncratic guild details aren't covered here. For example, any oaths of fealty the thief may have to pledge, and the exact rules and constitution (if one exists) of the guild isn't covered here. If a DM wants this kind of depth of detail, he will surely want to write such details for himself.

Also, infrequent reference is made to any of the kits, proficiencies, or magic items introduced in this book. This is deliberate, ensuring that DMs who wish to be cautious about introducing such new elements are not prevented from being able to use the design system.

In summary, all the really important stuff you are going to need is here, and for any frills you want to add—go ahead!

Guild Background

First, we need to establish the background of the guild. Such details of the guild as size, rulership, and the like will be affected by social factors, alignment, and so on. Therefore, this background is developed first. In this way, later dice rolls for aspects of the guild can be given modifiers

for previously established background.

Many of the tables to follow will refer to background elements already detailed in the previous section, so the DM will know what brief entries mean. This obviously aids the process of DM selection, if dice-rolling is not being used.

Social Alignment

This is an optional step. In some game settings, communities will have definite dominant social alignments (see *WORLD OF GREYHAWK® Fantasy Game Setting*). Sometimes, while a specific alignment cannot be stated, a general trend (for example, to good rather than evil) can be given. Social alignment along the good-neutral-evil, and lawful-neutral-chaotic axes, should be recorded if the DM is happy that he knows them.

If the alignment is divided, the alignment of the rulers should be used for later dice roll modifiers, but the fact that the common people are different should also be noted.

Special Social Factors

These include racial divisions, religious persecution of thieves, unique historical factors, and the like. The DM should note any of these which are important. Since such factors will always be unique, there is no way the design system here can accommodate them. The DM will have to ascribe modifiers to certain dice rolls for these factors as he sees fit!

Size of Community

The DM should have a reasonable idea of how many people live in the town or city where the thieves' guild is located. Most sourcepacks give such figures, and if the DM has designed his own campaign world then he should ascribe a suitable figure. For DMs uncertain about this, in medieval times only capital cities in Europe had a six-figure total of inhabitants, and many villages and hamlets had but a few score. Prosperous major towns would have in the order of 4-10,000 or so, and important cities perhaps 20-60,000 (depending on which century is taken for reference). There is no need for the DM to be ultra-accurate, but population will greatly affect the number of thieves in the guild, so the DM should record this.

Wealth of Community

No absolute figures are given here, because different DMs will work on different absolute scales—some campaigns are money-poor, others almost swim in gold. So, Table 7 uses relative divisions of wealth. A simple d20 roll on this table will determine the effective wealth of the community the guild is located in. There are many modifiers to this dice roll, and these are shown directly below the table.

Table 7:
WEALTH OF COMMUNITY WITH THIEVES' GUILD

d20 Rol	Relative Wealth of Community
1	Very Poor (subsistence)*

2-5	Poor
6-9	Fair
10-14	Average
15-17	Comfortable
18-19	Wealthy
20+	Rich

* Maximum population around 1,000.

Modifiers to d20 Roll:

Capital City: +5, never less than

Average

Major Town: +3

Port: +3

On Major Inland Trade Route: +2

Purely Agricultural Economy: -2

Population of 500 or Below: -1

What is important to remember here is that this dice roll does not actually indicate how wealthy the average citizen is. What the dice roll indicates is how much money is whizzing about which is up for grabs (literally). Thus, in a port a lot of trade passes through, much money changes hands, and the passing-through trade (and wealthy merchants) makes the city much richer in effect than the average income would suggest. The effective wealth level is another important factor in determining how many thieves will be guildmembers in the city.

Attitudes of the Law

This is a major factor affecting any thieves' guild. Roll d20 on Table 8 to determine the attitude of the militia, watch, police force, etc., in the city or town where the thieves' guild is located. Modifiers to this d20 roll are listed below the table as before.

Table 8:
LEGAL ATTITUDES

d20 Roll	Attitudes of the Law
1-3	Persecution
4-7	Hassle
8-11	Opposition
12-13	Complex/Mix
14-17	Tolerance
18-20	Corruption

Modifiers to d20 Roll:

Lawful social alignment: -2

Chaotic social alignment: +2

Good social alignment: Reroll 1s and 20s

Evil social alignment: -1

Relationship with Merchants

This will also have a slight effect on the number of thieves in the guild; the easier it is to extort the goodies from merchants, the more light-fingered thugs will sign up to be part of the organization responsible for extracting the shiny gold stuff from them! Roll on Table 9 to determine the relationship the thieves have with the merchants.

Table 9:
MERCHANTS' ATTITUDES TOWARD THIEVES

d20 Merchants' dominant

Roll attitude to thieves

1-2	Warfare
3-6	Opposition
7-13	Standoff
14-15	Complex/Mix
16	Submission
17-19	Infiltration
20	Submission

Modifiers to d20 Roll:

Lawful social alignment: -2

Chaotic social alignment: +1

Society is Poor (or worse): -4

Society is Wealthy: +1

Society is Rich: +2 (but a roll of 1 still means Warfare!)

Law is tolerant of thieves: +1

Law is corrupt: +2

Relationships with other Guilds

Table 10 is provided for DMs who need for some reason to determine, at random, the relationship between thieves and the guilds they are most likely to cooperate with: assassins, beggars, and bards. It is strongly suggested to the DM that these relationships should be scripted, rather than dice-rolled, but if a DM needs to develop a guild and its background quickly a dice roll will do the job. Separate d20 rolls should be used for each guild.

Table 10:
THIEVES AND OTHER GUILDS

d20

Roll Relationship of Thieves Guild with

	Assassins	Beggars	Bards
1-2	Hostile	Hostile	Hostile
3-4	Indifferent	Hostile	Indifferent

5-6	Indifferent	Indifferent	Indifferent
7-8	Indifferent	Neutral	Indifferent
9-10	Neutral	Neutral	Indifferent
11-12	Neutral	Favorable	Neutral
13-14	Neutral	Favorable	Neutral
15-16	Favorable	Co-operative	Neutral
17-18	Favorable	Co-operative	Neutral
19	Co-operative	Close	Favorable
20	Close	Close	Co-operative

Modifiers to d20 Rolls:

Law attitude is persecutory or hassling: +1 to assassins/beggars

Social alignment is good: -2 to assassins, +1 to beggars

Social alignment is evil: +2 to assassins

A Hostile result doesn't mean open aggression unless the DM wants a running feud as a storyline! For example, if hostility exists between thieves and assassins this is most unlikely to explode into open aggression (unless, say, an assassin has slain the thieves' guildmaster). Indifferent means the groups have few dealings; Neutral differs in that the two groups have more dealings, maybe for practical reasons, although they have neither fondness nor enmity for each other. Favorable means that the two guilds get on well enough, though they may not always trust each other too well! Cooperative means that the groups enjoy a good relationship, may plan together, and that a fair level of trust exists between guildmembers. Close means that the two guilds work closely together, exchanging information, helping with common-interest tasks, with one guild even prepared to help the other if it is under threat or attack (at least until the bodies start to drop!).

Details of the Guild

Having established these background details, it's down to the nitty-gritty. The first, crucial, determination is how many thieves there are in the city or town where the guild is. This is not necessarily the same number as are in the guild, but working out how many light-fingered gents (or ladies) are about town is a necessary precursor to that.

Table 11 does not use a d20 roll. Instead, it is a matrix from which the DM only needs to read off one figure. If the DM knows the population of the town/city, and the wealth level, a single read-off gives the range for the number of thieves. After each dice roll indicated in a column, a bracketed figure is given—this is a (rounded) average which the DM can use if he hasn't the time to roll dice on the table.

Totals from Table 11 are not cumulative, save for populations of over 10,000 (where the "per extra . . ." number, or a multiple, is added to the "5,001-10,000" number).

We now know how many thieves there are in the town or city, but how many are actually in the guild? This depends in large part on the rulership of the guild, which should now be determined.

Table 11:
THIEVES IN TOWNS AND CITIES

Population	Economic Level					
	Very	Poor	Fair	Average	Comfortable	Wealthy Rich

	Poor						
Up to 5000	0	1d2-1(1)	1d2-1(1)	1d2-1(1)	1d3-1(1)	1d3-1	1d3
501-1000	1d2-1(1)	1d3-1(1)	1d3-1(1)	1d3(2)	1d3(2)	1d4(3)	1d4+1(4)
1001-2000	n/a	1d3(2)	1d4(3)	1d3+1(3)	1d4+1(4)	1d3+2(4)	1d4+1(5)
2001-5000	n/a	1d4+1(4)	1d6+1(5)	1d6+2(6)	1d6+3(7)	1d8+3(8)	2d6+2(9)
5001-10,000	n/a	1d6+2(6)	1d10+2(8)	2d6+2(9)	2d8+2(11)	2d10+2(13)	4d6+2(15)
Per extra							
5,000*	n/a	1d4+1(4)	1d6+1(5)	1d6+2(6)	1d6+3(7)	1d8+3(8)	2d6+2(9)

Modifiers to totals rolled. Add the following percentages to the total rolled, rounding fractions over one-half upward:

Social alignment is chaotic: +10%

Attitude of law is tolerant or corrupt: +10%

Merchants are infiltrated or in submission: +10%

* Or fraction above 2,000.

Guild Rulership

A roll on Table 12 determines the nature of rulership of the guild. The DM wishing to select, rather than roll, this rulership might want to look through the following section to look at the effects of rulership on the guild before making his choice.

Table 12: GUILD RULERSHIP

d20

Roll	Guild Leadership
1-13	Guildmaster
14	Complex/Mix
15	Democracy
16-19	Council (d3+2 members)
20*	Reroll on Table 13

*Natural 20 (regardless of modifiers) only.

Modifiers to die roll:

Social alignment is lawful: -1

Social alignment is chaotic: +2

Table 13:

UNUSUAL GUILD RULERSHIP

d20

Roll	Guild Leadership
1-2	Leaderless
3-8	Complex/mix
9-10	Special Guildmaster (dragon, etc.)
11-12	Special Council (concealed Drow, etc.)
13-20	Reroll on Table 12, ignoring any roll of 20

At this stage, the DM can also determine the rulership style of the ruler(s). Table 14 can be used for all cases in which the guild has a guildmaster, and also for council leadership. It is not suitable for democratic guilds, where there is no real rulership as such. On Table 14, three d20 rolls are needed.

Table 14: RULERSHIP STYLE

Strong-Weak		Cruel-Just		Despotic-Populist	
d20 Roll	Rulership	d20 Roll	Rulership	d20 Roll	Rulership
1-5	Strong	1-4	Cruel	1-4	Despotic
6-12	Fairly Strong	5-11	Fairly Cruel	5-10	Fairly Despotic
13-17	Fairly Weak	12-16	Fairly Just	11-16	Fairly Populist
18-20	Weak	17-20	Just	17-20	Populist

Modifiers to die roll	Modifiers to die roll	Modifiers to die roll
-1 if social alignment lawful	-1 if social alignment lawful	+1 if social alignment lawful
+2 if social alignment chaotic	+1 if social alignment chaotic	-2 if social alignment evil
alignment good	-1 if wealth level poor or fair	+1 if social alignment good
	good	+2 if social alignment good
-1 if social alignment evil	-1 if rulership style weak	-1 if rulership style strong
		-4 (-2) if rulership style cruel (fairly cruel)

The final step is to determine guild organization, and this is done with a single d20 roll on Table 15. Some of the results from this table may need particularly careful thought, because some odd-looking results can emerge. The DM can crop out such oddities if he wishes.

Table 15: GUILD ORGANIZATION

d20 Roll	Guild Organization
1-6	Centralist
7-12	Cohesive
13	Complex/Mix
14-17	Fractionated
18-19	Oppositional
20	Anarchic

Modifiers to dice roll:

- 2 if social alignment lawful
- +1 if social alignment chaotic
- +2 (+1) if Guild rulership is weak (fairly weak)
- 1 if Guild rulership is strong
- +2 if Guild is Leaderless

A major shake-up of what the DM has rolled may be indicated if a dice roll indicating Oppositional or Anarchic guild organization is rolled on this table. Oppositional means there are competing,

small guilds (and Fractionated means there are sub-guilds within the guild); Anarchic, that there is no real guild at all. The worked example later shows that the combination of such results that at first seem at-odds (e.g., guild rulership by a single guildmaster) is actually workable, although the overall picture which emerges may be a strange one!

Some results may need re-rolling, however. The one notable case is the Oppositional structure if the absolute number of thieves in town is small. You can't really have a plausible collection of competing guilds with only six thieves in town, for example (but maybe two very small gangs could exist, after all . . .)

The final step is to determine how many of the thieves in the town or city are actually members of the guild.

Guildmembers and The Rest

The base percentage of thieves who will be members of the thieves' guild is 75%. The following modifiers are applied to this number:

- +10% if social alignment is lawful
- 20% if social alignment is chaotic
- +10% if the attitude of law is persecutory
- +10% if merchants are submissive or infiltrated
- +10% (+5%) if guild rulership is strong (fairly strong)
- 10% (-5%) if guild rulership is weak (fairly weak)

What of the other thieves (assuming there are any)? What is the attitude of the guild to the residual freelancers? Table 16 gives a die roll for determining this attitude, which may also be taken to reflect the guild's attitude to outsiders who stray onto its patch. Thus, a guild which is punitive to indigenous non-guildmembers ("join up or we'll cut your hands off") will likely be hostile to outsiders as well.

**Table 16: GUILD ATTITUDES
TOWARDS GUILDLESS THIEVES**
d20

Roll	Dominant attitude
1-5	Hostility and persecution
6-10	Hostility
11-15	Neutrality
16-18	Co-operation
19-20	Special relationship

Hostility means that the guildmembers will make it very clear to a non-guildmember working in the guild's territory that he isn't welcome. They may rough up the offender, send him threatening messages, play an unpleasant and only half-joking practical joke on him, and the like. The message is, join up (or get out of town), or else. If Persecution is added to this, the offender will be given an even starker choice: Join up or die. Neutrality means that the guildmembers may try to persuade non-guildmembers to join up, but they will tend to stress the benefits to all concerned rather than using threats. A determined freelancer will probably be left to go his own way by such thieves, but they

will certainly not assist him or have any fellow-feeling for him. The guild will not sell equipment or offer training to the freelancer, except perhaps at exorbitant prices. If a guild is neutral to foreign thieves, it may allow them to work on the guild's patch providing that only small-scale operations are involved and a fee is paid to the guild.

Cooperation suggests that freelancers may work with the guildmembers, maybe on a special-case basis. The guild may take the attitude that if these people won't join, it's better to keep them friendly. Equipment and training is charged at a premium, though. Special Relationship suggests some unusually close link between guildmembers and outsiders. The example of the Thieves' Guild of Mallain gives an example of how this can be scripted by the DM.

Experience Levels of Thieves

Table 17 below shows the experience-level ranges of thieves as a function of how many there are in a guild. More populous guilds, which will always tend to be in major cities and towns, and rich places, are the ones which will attract more experienced thieves to them.

Table 17 should be used as follows. In the left-hand column is shown the number of thieves (this is the total number in town, not just in the guild). The next five columns show dice rolls which need to be made for the five highest-level thieves in town. The following column shows numbers, and levels, for the middle-echelon thieves; those above the level of apprentice, but not members of the senior ranks. All remaining thieves will be first-level apprentices.

The seniors should be taken as the top echelon of the guild. The highest level rolled will be the guildmaster (if there is one), or the most powerful guild-affiliated thief. The other seniors can be used to make up a ruling council (if there is one), or used for key positions such as accountant, quartermaster, deputy guildmaster, subguild-master (for one quarter of town), or others. The number of seniors can be slightly increased (at the lowest experience level) for really sizeable guilds. Freelancers will come equally from the middle-echelon and apprentice levels. If the DM wants any middle—to high-level freelancers, these should be scripted as individualized NPCs and not the result of any dice roll! It is important to separate out guildmembers and freelancers at this stage in the thief listing the DM makes.

Experience Levels: A Note

The levels from Table 17 will be low to medium, except for guildmasters of major guilds. This is designed to be suitable for campaigns which are not top-heavy with over-powered, high-level characters. If you have PCs running around at 15th level, or even higher, and you want a thieves' guild as a source of enemies, you will need to up the levels somewhat. You could always consider resting these PCs and playing at more reasonable levels, of course.

Table 17: EXPERIENCE LEVELS OF THIEVES

No. of Thieves	Seniors					Middle Echelon
	A	B	C	D	E	
1-5*	1d3	1d2	1d2	—	—	n/a
6-10	d4+1	d4	d4	—	—	2xd2
11-15	d4+2	d3+1	d3+1	d2+1	d2+1	3xd2
16-20	d4+3	d3+2	d3+2	d3+2	d2+2	2x(d2+1), 5xd2
21-25	d6+3	d4+2	d4+2	d4+1	d2+2	5xd3, 5xd2
26-30	d8+3	d6+3	d4+3	d4+2	d4+1	4x(d3+1), 4xd3, 6xd2

31-40	d6+5	d6+4	d4+4	d6+2	d4+2	4x(d4+1), 5x(d3+1), 8xd2
41-50	d6+6	d6+4	d6+4	d4+4	d6+2	6x(d4+1), 8x(d3+1), 12xd2
51-75	d6+8	d6+6	d6+5	d6+4	d6+3	8x(d4+1), 12x(d3+1), 15xd2
76-100	d8+8	d6+7	d6+5	d6+4	d6+3	15x(d4 +1), 20xd4, 30xd3
101+	d10+8	d6+8	d6+6	d6+5	d6+4	10% are d6+1, 10% are d4+1, 25% are d4, 25% are d3

Multi-classed thieves

Table 17 will do for determining single-classed thieves, but dwarves and elves in particular may be likely to be multi-classed. To determine this, the DM needs to know how many thieves are nonhuman.

Rolling on Table 18 will determine the race of each thief in the guild. One roll is made for each thief (freelancers can be determined at this stage too). This table is a generic one, and assumes a definite human dominance (which most campaign locations will have). However, this is obviously unsuitable for determining, say, the composition of the thieves' guild of the core community of an elven heartland, where virtually all the thieves will be elves or half-elves. In such cases, the DM can bypass Table 18 and just decide race on a per-capita basis. For example, if 70% of the inhabitants are elves, then for each thief a roll of 1-7 on d10 will indicate that he is an elf. Modifiers can also be used; for example, if elves dominate dwarves in a mixed society, a dice roll modifier of -5 could be applied to the dice roll on Table 18.

Table 18: THIEF RACES

d100

Roll	Thief Race
01-06	Elf
07-14	Half-elf
15-44	Human
45-50	Gnome
51-58	Halfling
59-62	Human, dual-class
63-93	Human
94-99	Dwarf
00	Special (natural 00 only)*

Table 19 contains sub-tables which can be used to determine whether the thief is multi-classed (nonhuman) or if the thief is dual-classed (human).

Given the race and possible multi-class nature of each thief, the final step is to adjust the levels from Table 17 for multi-and dual-class thieves.

For multi-classed nonhuman thieves, reduce the thief level by 1d2 from the original dice roll from Table 17 if the character has two classes, and by 1d2+1 levels if the character is a triple-classed fighter/mage/thief. No reductions can take an NPC below 1st level, of course. The character will have the same level in his other classes, if this is possible (in some cases it may not be; e.g., a multi-class character cannot usually be a 2nd-level thief/2nd-level mage. Check the XPs needed for progress in each class!).

With dual-class human characters, experience gained in the "old" class will be 1d4 levels lower

than that gained as a thief (but never below 2nd level). The thief level rolled from Table 17 is not adjusted in this case.

This all looks fairly horrendous. In fact, it is fairly simple, albeit a little time-consuming (but if you want a complete picture of a guild, it does take time). The example of the Thieves' Guild of Mallain (later in this chapter) shows that rolling up thieves is a fairly simple business, despite all these tables!

Table 19: THIEF CLASSES

Dwarves

d20

Roll Character Classes

1-8 Fighter/thief

9-20 Thief only

Elves

d20

Roll Character Classes

1-6 Mage/thief

7-8 Fighter/thief

9-10 Fighter/mage/thief

11-20 Thief only

Half-elves

d20

Roll Character Classes

1-4 Mage/thief

5-7 Fighter/thief

8-10 Fighter/mage/thief

11-20 Thief only

Gnomes

d20

Roll Character Classes

1-4 Fighter/thief

5-8 Illusionist/thief

9-20 Thief only

Halflings

d20

Roll Character Classes

1-5 Fighter/thief

6-20 Thief only

Humans

d20

Roll Previous Character Class

1-12 Fighter

13	Ranger
14-15	Mage
16	Specialist wizard
17-18	Cleric
19-20	Bard

For humans, some classes are not included as options for previous experience. It is inconceivable that a fallen paladin could demean himself to thievery, likewise that an ex-druid could so totally alter his entire framework of thought. If the DM wants such an exotic possibility, there would have to be a truly extraordinary reason for it.

Non-Thief Guildmembers

The guild may well have very close affiliations with a small number of NPCs—especially tough fighters—who may be honorary “guildmembers.” These men may guard the guildhouse, go on planned jobs as look-outs and muscle, provide the muscle to enforce protection rackets, act as bodyguards, and the like. However, they will not usually be full members of the guild. The DM should design such NPCs as the need arises.

Fleshing out Guildmembers

You now have a bare-bones list of guildmembers and other thieves in the town. How far you go beyond this point depends on how much extra information you need for the campaign.

Alignment

This is worth determining for all thieves in the guild, because it will have a powerful effect on the way the guild operates, on guild intrigues, and so on. The alignment of the guildmaster and the top senior thieves should always be selected by the DM to fit the needs of the campaign. The rulership style dice rolls should be strongly suggestive of certain options in any event. A fairly strong, cruel, and fairly despotic guildmaster looks like a good candidate for neutral evil, whereas a fairly strong, just, and populist member of a ruling council would be closer to chaotic good.

For other thieves (juniors and members of the middle echelons) a dice roll on Table 20 can be used to determine alignment. This table is biased away from lawfulness and towards neutrality, which is probably an accurate reflection of most thieves. However, if the DM wants more goody-goody types or lawfuls then these options can be fudged into the table in place of (or via) the “Dominant social alignment” entry.

Table 20: NPC THIEF ALIGNMENTS

d20

Roll	Thief Alignment
1	Neutral Good
2-3	Chaotic Good
4	Lawful Neutral
5-10	Neutral
11-12	Dominant social alignment

13-14	Chaotic Neutral
15-16	Lawful Evil
17-19	Neutral Evil
20	Chaotic Evil

Modifiers to dice roll:

+2 if social alignment is evil

-2 if social alignment is good (But a natural roll of “20” still means Chaotic Evil)

Note: For “dominant social alignment,” if the DM is uncertain, take neutral. If dominant social alignment is lawful good, take neutral good (1-4 on 1d6) or lawful neutral (5-6 on d6) instead.

Prime Requisite

All thieves will have Dexterity of at least 9. You can roll NPC thief Dexterity on 8+1d10, adding +1 for characters of 4th or higher level and +2 for characters of 8th or higher level. Elves and halflings gain +1 to Dexterity scores. It is strongly recommended that no scores above 18 be allowed, and certainly absurd scores like 20+ should be reduced to 18. Other ability scores are discussed below. Dexterity scores should be recorded for all thieves, since it affects AC and their skills.

Senior Thieves

Such thieves—including the guildmaster!—should be designed with a little more detail. The following points can be kept in mind when adding some detail to their basic profiles:

Physical Factors: Simple details like age, height, weight, and appearance can be determined. Senior thieves can be taken to be 25+1d20 years if a random determination is needed. Sex can be determined randomly also.

Exceptional Ability Scores: Thieves of high or medium level should have fair abilities to have survived so long. Allow a flat 1-in-4 chance for each non-Dex ability to be rolled on 2d4+10 and record exceptional (15+) scores.

Magic Items: Senior thieves will certainly have magic items suitable for thieves. Different campaigns vary hugely in the amount of magic knocking around. A good guide is to sneak a look at thief PCs (and NPCs) in campaigns you think are well-run, and/or the blueprint profiles given later, and take hints from these about the nature and number of magic items possessed. When in doubt, always be stingy. Magic can be added to a magic-weak campaign; it’s hard to retrieve it when too much is floating about.

Guild Position: Non-guildmasters will still likely be important and occupy key positions (especially if council members). A shrewd guildmaster, for example, will keep the second-rankers happy with important things to do. Quartermaster, deputy guildmaster, chief of blackmail, chief of espionage, liaison officer (with other guilds), and many other options can be written in here.

Other Stuff: Personal idiosyncrasies are always a nice, characterizing touch. Cover identities are also important; what face does the thief present to the public? Does he have a trade, is he a merchant, is he perhaps the Constable of the Watch or a trusted tax official?

The most important case, obviously, is the guildmaster himself (or the ruling council). Such an NPC must be individually designed by the DM to suit the campaign. The blueprint profiles which follow the guild design section give a couple of examples of fully fleshed-out mid-to-high-level guildmasters, and these can be used by the DM as they are or as an indication of how to go about

designing a guildmaster NPC.

Junior Thieves

These will not need the kind of detailing the seniors will, unless the DM is determined to have complete details of everything! Race, class, prime requisite, and level will be sufficient to begin with, especially for mere 1st- or 2nd-level apprentice types. The addition of names should round off these basic details.

A Final Record

Now that the initial die rolls for numbers and levels of thieves have been rounded off (and modified) by race, and dual/multi-class options, the basic details for the guild thieves can be determined—summaries of guild seniors, minor magic items for juniors, the odd exceptional ability score, hit points if the DM has rolled these up, and the like.

Cash and Carry

Having populated the guild, the final step is to take care of a few practical details.

Guild Dues

Guildmembers have to pay fees to belong to the guild, and they may also have to pay cuts of their take on jobs which are “licensed by” the guild. The DM should fix these levels to suit his campaign. For guild dues, a sum equal to about one month’s living expenses for the thief PC is reasonable. This sum will increase with the gaining of experience levels, which is reasonable. Guildmembers get cheaper training, and training is longer and more expensive at higher levels, so higher dues reflect this. Fixing a cut needs to be done on a case-by-case basis. If the guild has tipped off the thief with a lot of information important to pulling a robbery, it could well ask for a quarter or even a third or more of the take, for example.

The dues and other payments due should be recorded by the DM, together with a brief note on what the PC thief gets in the way of special benefits for his dues.

Normal Resources

A roll on Table 21 can be used to determine the availability of standard, non-magical equipment items. This reflects how well the Guild is equipped with illegal items, or equipment which is of dubious legality (and which may be illegal in highly lawful societies). Add +1 to the dice roll for every 10 thieves in the guild to a maximum of +4 for a guild with 40 or more thieves.

Table 21:

AVAILABILITY OF RESOURCES

d20

Roll	Equipment Availability
1-5	Poor
6-10	Fair
11-17	Average

A roll indicating Poor means that illegal items (as shown in Table 31) cost 50-80% ($40 + \{d4 \times 10\}$) more than usual, and are at least 50% likely not to be available at any given time. Items which are noted in Table 31 as being rare will be almost impossible to obtain. A thief wanting an illegal item which is “out of stock” can only try again after a gap of 2 weeks to see if fresh supplies have been obtained. If the availability of resources is Fair, the item costs 10-40% more than usual and there is a 30% chance that it is unavailable, but the thief can make a weekly check.

A roll indicating Average allows items to be had for the usual price, with only a 15% chance that an item is unavailable (a check for fresh deliveries being made weekly). If the roll shows Good availability, prices are 10% below normal, and items are only 5% likely to be unavailable at any time (check for fresh deliveries weekly).

These rules, especially on availability, can be readily tweaked by the DM as desired. If the DM wishes to deny the thief some equipment item, then it simply isn't there, for example. Conversely, the DM may wish to rule that there are always lockpicks available, since these are so essential for very basic thief skills (picking locks, and maybe finding and removing certain types of traps).

Special Resources

No table is given for randomly determining these special resources, because they require careful attention and thought on the part of the DM. From the list below, the DM should select a small number (or none, for a small guild) which will suit the campaign. This list is only a partial one, and the DM can add similar special resources:

Tame Mage: The guild has a helpful mage on tap, who casts spells to help thieves (but doesn't take risks). If the guild has a mage/thief or two, this mage is of higher level, and may train these mage/thieves.

Tame Cleric: A rarer instance, but possible if the cleric is very chaotic, a renegade, etc. In some specific mythoi this might not be a rare case at all (for example, clerics of Mask in Faerun).

Expert Fence: The guild works regularly with, or has, a fence with truly exceptional knowledge, information networks, and/or the ability to ship hot goods out of the country fast.

Government Snitch: The guild's man in City Hall. Very helpful in telling the Guild about the shipment of government goods, the Mint, secrets of political NPCs for blackmail, and lots more.

Merchant Snitch: The guild's man in the warehouses, docks, etc. Not a nightwatchman, but someone much more important—a harbormaster, Commander of the Night Watch, etc. Can supply the guild with watch hours, incoming and stored cargo lists, and much more.

A Friend at Court: A person with the ear of the King/Queen/Baron/Royal Physician/Courtesan/Bimbo Princess. Subtly different from a government snitch, and more suited to a swashbuckling rogue campaign or guild.

Friends in other Guild(s): The guild has very cordial relations with the thieves' guild in a major city, even the capital, for reasons of blood relation, old friendships and co-adventuring, etc.

These special resources clearly open up all kinds of adventure possibilities. Getting a message to the important NPC is a standard option, obtaining a reward for them is another (e.g., the tame mage wants that nice wand of lightning his enemy has and could the guild steal it for him?), rescuing them from imprisonment is a third. Subtler possibilities could include finding out who has found out about the guild's Government Snitch and is blackmailing him for a fortune, and the like.

Major Activities

Here, the DM should determine and make a record of the secondary activities which are important to the guild. These include (but aren't limited to) protection rackets, smuggling, kidnapping, slavery, forgery, clipping, "entertainments," and similar fun and games reviewed earlier. The DM should determine which activities the guild is strongly involved with to suit the social alignment, the campaign, and the nature of the guild rulers. For example, a strong-cruel-despotic neutral evil guildmaster is a lot more likely to get the guild involved with slavery and kidnapping than a just, populist good-aligned guildmaster. Some DMs may also wish to exclude certain activities such as slavery or kidnapping because players of good-aligned thieves might not want their characters part of such activities. However, it is up to the PCs to do something about such evil goings-on if they cannot accept them—a spur to their creativity and scheming.

The Guildhouse

This is going to be of major importance to almost all thieves' guilds, and there are four important points relating to it:

Location and Cover: Where is the guildhouse, and what does it look like upfront? The DM must choose a location and cover suitable to the town or city, and the nature of the guild. It could be a fortified large building among warehouses or down by the docks, an underground cellar complex below the private home of a senior thief, entered via the sewers, or the basements and cellars of a tavern in a shady part of town. A small guild may only meet in the back room of a shady tavern, of course, but any significant guild needs somewhere fairly secret and strong.

Contents: What's in the guildhouse? Is equipment kept hidden there or does the quartermaster carry it with him (unlikely unless he has a bag of holding)? Are there hidey-holes? How many exits are there (there will usually be several)?

Guards: Who protects the guildhouse? Can reinforcements be summoned quickly? If there is a building which is a front for the place (e.g., a tavern above the cellars of the guildhouse below), can extra help (hefty fighters) be had quickly?

Traps and Protections: The guildhouse will almost certainly have magical and mechanical traps—the entrance may be a very strong door, with a couple of locks (and only guildmembers have keys). Down a passage, a secret door may be placed to allow entrance—following the passage leads into very unpleasant traps. Magical traps may have been paid for, or placed by mage/thieves. Mechanical traps will be of many kinds, but will often use disabling/paralyzing attacks just in case a novice makes a mistake and takes the wrong turn somewhere!

Bearing all these points in mind, the DM should design the guildhouse, drawing floorplans and maps.

The Thieves' Guild of Mallain

An Example of Guild Design

Our DM is scripting the thieves' guild for the large town (or small city) of Mallain. The DM knows some basic social facts about this place, having placed it on the map in his campaign world, and records these facts for future reference. The issue of weak rulership is something the DM had decided in advance, likewise the fact that Mallain is in a civilized area of the country, and on a major inland trade route. The DM determines the population at somewhere around 17,000 (not too large, not too small!) and decides that 5% are halflings and 5% are half-elves; there are no full elves, and a

smattering of dwarves and gnomes. The DM considers that there is a slight tendency toward lawfulness in the community, but not a strong one, so the overall social alignment is recorded as neutral.

How wealthy is Mallain? The DM rolls a 7 on Table 7. To this is added +2, because the town is on a major trade route. The DM adds a further +2, since Mallain is a large town, if not a major one. This gives an adjusted total of 11, so the wealth level is average.

The attitude of the law is resolved on Table 8, and a dice roll of 17 indicates tolerance. Why? One clear reason sticks out a mile: under-manning. The DM has already recorded that the ruler of the land is weak, and his militia is small in this safe, secure land. There simply isn't the manpower to go around chasing the thieves.

The attitude of merchants is resolved on Table 9. A roll of 14, modified to 15 by the tolerance of the law, indicates a complex/mix. The DM isn't sure enough of how to script a complexity here; he isn't clear enough in his own mind about the details of Mallain. So he opts for a mix, and makes two more dice rolls on the same table to see what the mix is (adding +1 to each roll for the tolerance of the law). He rolls 12 (13, with a +1), which indicates a standoff; his second roll is 1, and even with a +1 modifier this indicates warfare! How to synthesize this into a whole? The DM reasons that most merchants are described by a standoff—they put up with the thieves in a fairly resigned way. A minority, though, are furious about thieving for some reason; maybe they have suffered particularly heavy losses. This place isn't rich, after all. They try hard to persuade the ineffectual militia to do something about the thieves.

Deciding on thieves and other guilds, the DM does not roll on Table 10 for assassins and beggars. The DM isn't happy handling assassins, so he decides there aren't any in town, obviating the need for a dice roll. With beggars, the DM wants to choose Close Cooperation, details of which he records. This is a plot element he wants to exploit later on. If the beggars spy on the merchants, facilitating robberies in a place of only average wealth, it could help explain why some of the merchants are at the end of their tether, too. Matters are beginning to come together fairly nicely, but there is lots still to do. How about bards? The DM rolls a 1, hostility! Very odd, and at this stage the DM just records this without thinking about why. He decides to come back to this problem later.

From Table 11, the DM makes an initial recording of how many thieves live and work in Mallain. The population is 17,000. The DM rolls in the "5001-10,000" row, and twice in the "Per extra 5,000" row, in the Average (wealth) column. These rolls are 2d6+2, and 1d6+2 (twice) respectively—a total of 4d6+6. This is rolled as a total of 19, but the DM adds 10% to this because the law is tolerant, for a total of 21. They need not all be guildmembers, of course; the DM needs to know about the guild rulership to determine this. Recording the figure of 21, the DM moves on.

A roll of 5 on Table 12 shows that the guild is ruled by a guildmaster. From Table 14, the die rolls produce a picture of what this guildmaster is like. A first roll of 18 shows he is weak. A second roll of 12, reduced to 11 because of this weakness, makes him fairly cruel. A final roll of 12, reduced to 10 because of this cruelty, makes him fairly despotic. In summary: Weak, fairly cruel, fairly despotic. A rather pathetic creature, all told. This comes to the rescue of the DM when he rolls on Table 15 and comes up with a 20—Anarchy!

The DM is taken aback. There is a guild here, with a guildmaster, and now he is plunged into a real complication. He is about to re-roll the dice, but spends a minute or two in imaginative reverie. Perhaps, after all, this is workable. An old, feeble, weak, guildmaster has lost his authority. He has resorted to cruelty and despotism to try to hold on to his guildmaster status, but lacks the strength even to do this effectively. Guildmembers have drifted away in open contempt, but have not yet formed a separate guild (that would be Opposition, not Anarchy). They don't have the heart to kill the old thief, either (guildmasters appoint their own successors, the DM decides, so he'd have to be killed).

The DM rolls on Table 16 before all this has sunk in—if there isn't a guild, how can it have relations with outsiders and freelancers? But the roll of 19, Special Relationship, stimulates some further thoughts in the DM's head.

The DM decides that the guildmaster has managed to hang on to a small rump of the guild—1d6, he decides, and rolls just 4. Later on, he will select these as being primarily senior and compatible with the guildmaster's alignment. There is no need for the standard percentile roll to determine the percentage in the guild, because this is a special and very unusual circumstance. The other 16 thieves all work independently, maybe allying with each other in small groups for the odd job now and then. Perhaps a lack of coordination among them means that some targets are hit too often, which wouldn't happen if the guild was coordinating matters properly. Maybe this is why some merchants are so desperate that they want warfare declared on the thieves—this makes very good sense. It also explains why the law is tolerant—they know it's going to be hard to track down and deal with any central organization which really cuts the mustard in Mallain, and the DM adds this detail to his notes.

The "Special Relationship" is that holding between the rump of the guild, and the freelancers still in town. To complete the picture, though, the DM rolls another d20—giving a result of 6, hostility. This is the attitude of all the thieves of Mallain (or most of them!) to outsiders from beyond the town, to complete the picture.

The DM now has to determine the levels of the thieves in Mallain. There are 21 thieves in the town, and from Table 17 the DM determines the levels of the seniors as 8th, 6th, 4th (two), and 3rd. From the 5xd3 and 5xd2 rolls, another two 3rd-level and four 2nd-level are added. The remaining 10 thieves will all be apprentices. The DM records these figures on some rough paper.

From Tables 18, 19, and 20 the DM makes die rolls to detail these thieves. There are 5% half-elves and 5% halflings in Mallain, but no full elves or gnomes, so the DM decides in advance to replace any elf rolled up with a half-elf, and any gnome with a halfling. Two thieves were not rolled randomly; the 8th-level human guildmaster, and the 6th-level half-elfen thief the DM wants to use as a plot element to advance the theme of anarchy within the guild.

The half-elf is a dashing, romantic rogue-figure who is the focus of the opposition to the ailing old guildmaster. He has musicianship skills, and a brother who is a bard—hence one reason for the guildmaster's hostility to bards (this detail is added to the record sheet). This DM sees this character as very chaotic, and one who doesn't wish to be guildmaster. But the old guildmaster hates his charisma, youthfulness, and character, and has always blocked his progress. Now he sees him as the enemy who has drawn away the other thieves—a special relationship indeed, a very tempestuous and intrigue-ridden state of affairs. Added to this is the fact that the half-elf doesn't want to be guildmaster, but the juniors who have deserted the guild are begging him to lead them in a coup against the old guard. He alone has the experience and charisma to do this. The DM has been watching a few Errol Flynn movies of late. However, while Evlarel the half-elf is chaotic good, the old guildmaster is Neutral—it is too obvious and unsubtle to make him evil, which would submerge many of the intrigues into a simplistic good-versus-evil battle. But most of those staying loyal are evil—if they have to be eliminated, the DM prefers them to be evil than to encourage his PCs to attack and kill neutrals.

After this flight of fancy the DM comes back to earth. The guild is in a state of uproar and anarchy, but there are still some practical details to attend to. Guild dues still have to be decided—these will be the old rates, which applied when the guild was not torn asunder, but they are useful as a guide to what the reformed guild (if it does reform) will accept. (The DM notes them in brackets.) A similar consideration applies to normal resources, but the DM also notes the present availability (poor) by way of an update. Special resources are important—the DM determines that the thieves' guild has a

government snitch, a personal friend of the guildmaster, and this stool-pigeon is used to prime the military to arrest the hapless half-elf, driving him further underground, and making him an even more elusive and mysterious figure. The war between old Halradur and Evlarel gets hotter by the moment.

As for major activities, the DM decides that in such a fairly boring town as Mallain there is no scope for anything especially unusual. The declining guildmaster would not have had the strength of will to maintain any really nefarious activities. Individual thieves may kidnap, but the guild doesn't organize such actions. The guildhouse is located in the cellars of a local tavern, the DM decides; the Baron of Beef, run by one of the few thieves left who stays loyal to Halradur. This isn't a particularly creative design element, but the DM knows that matters are likely to be all-change in Mallain soon, and so can't be bothered to think up anything especially unusual. The tavern will make a good location for a final shoot-out in any event.

What began as a short exercise in rolling up a thieves' guild has now turned into a powerful intrigue which could cast a long shadow over most aspects of life in this town. The central struggle between an old guildmaster, with a small evil coterie, and desperate young thieves looking to a reluctant new leader is going to enmesh the unwary PCs as soon as they enter the place!

Unusual Guilds

The guild design system gives a wealth of detail on the traditional (in the AD&D® game) town or city thieves' guild. However, there are other possible guild structures which can be used by the DM in the campaign world. These are unlikely to be suitable for PC thieves (in most cases), but they add diversity and spice to any campaign.

The Traveling Guild

A group of traveling thieves, who work as a body and are effectively a guild on the road, makes an interesting encounter. Three variants on this theme include:

Gypsy Folk: This group travels in horse-drawn wagons. The community is just that—complete with many sniffing children, goats, snarling dogs, a few chickens kept for eggs, and lots else. In towns, the gypsies sell dried herbs and pressed flowers, and the wise woman of the group may read fortunes (using the Fortune Telling/Astrology proficiencies if appropriate). The gypsies will be extremely loyal to each other, and will usually be of Neutral (or chaotic neutral) alignment. If such folk are a common sight on the roads of the land, then the gypsy people may have extended clans related by intermarriage, so that if any violence is done to one of them an entire horde can be assembled to track down and punish the offender.

River Folk: A variant on the gypsy theme is to have a group (or groups) of traveling folk who work the waterways of the country. These people will almost certainly have merchant interests, or convey cargoes for others; thieving would not be an adequate income for them. They will supplement their income with thievery in and around the rougher ports, usually inland or estuarine. They are significantly more likely to be of evil alignments than are road-travelers. In the campaign world of Oerth (Greyhawk), the Rhennee folk are a good example of such river folk.

The Circus: This is a somewhat hackneyed theme, but should always be used in a campaign at some time. Thieves can make up the bulk of a traveling circus, which comes to towns and cities and cheerfully robs them. If the circus has monsters on show, then there is a rationale for having other character classes along for the ride who help the thieves and give the NPC band some diversity. Thus, clerics can be on hand to *snake charm* and *speak with animals* while mages could *charm*

monsters or *speak with monsters* (if of high enough level; arguably a 12th-level mage has lots better to do than traipse around with a circus). Thieves with specialist skills such as acrobats, cat burglars, etc., will fit well into such a group.

Players with any degree of gaming experience will have learned to keep well away from circuses. Old tricks such as having evil, high-level NPCs *polymorphed* into monsters or animals are well-known to such devotees of the game. So, it may be more enterprising to use some other group of entertainers, such as a traveling troupe of actors and musicians. They can perform the equivalent of passion plays, act and sing charming ethnic curiosities (especially elves), sing madrigals, and the like. A group of light-fingered expert thief choir elves could make for a lot of fun (they look so sweet and innocent, how could anyone suspect them?).

Piratical Guilds

Also travelers in some fashion, a guild of thieves who spend most of their time engaged in piracy is a complex and shifting structure requiring careful thought by the DM. There will obviously not be any form of guildhouse for such thieves, although a small number of secret guild hidey-holes (caves in the cliffs, deserted coves, desolate gull-haunted islands) could exist where spare equipment and vital emergency supplies might be placed at strategic locations. guildmasters could exist, but much more likely is a loosely-affiliated structure where several senior thieves, maintaining their positions by force in most cases, are equipotent. They might well all call themselves guildmaster! Such a guild would have a very strong tendency towards chaotic alignments, and a nearly-equal tendency towards evil.

Some type of organization and regularity would have to be imposed to make this a guild at all. Meetings half-yearly, with a quorum for votes and decisions to have any binding quality at all, would be a possibility. These could take place in the major piratical port, perhaps a town or city of unparalleled iniquity (what a place to send some PCs to track down the wicked pirates and stop their evil trade in pressganging/slavery/drug smuggling, etc.). Certainly, some mechanism for obtaining equipment and training (at the least) must exist.

For a notably more structured and stable rulership of a piratical-type operation (slaving), see the adventure module *A1-4, Scourge of the Slavelords*.

The Guild of Honorable Gentlemen

As a really unusual guild, which could exist in parallel with the established thieves guild in a large city, this is a splendid option.

The members are aristocrats, men of learning, education, and exalted social position (preferably by birth). They are refined, dignified gentlemen of impeccable manners and superior Charisma. They are a small group, and they thief for the excitement of it all. They are bored with their life of sybaritic self-indulgent possibilities, easy comforts, and gold-digging members of the opposite sex. They steal for the thrill of it.

What motivates these people is a challenge to their skill. They steal things not because they are valuable or important, but because they are there to be stolen (which doesn't mean that they are valueless or banal—they usually aren't). The Emerald of Kummkqvaat will be stolen by such a thief not because it's worth a fortune, but because it is believed to be impossible to steal it.

Such thieves will usually be of notably high level, and they will tend to have exceptional Intelligence and Charisma scores. They will very rarely be Evil, and will also tend away from Chaotic alignment. For these reasons, they can become excellent mentors for a PC thief if this is appropriate

to the campaign—for example, a PC thief can come across one of them at work, or find evidence of the person’s true identity as a renowned master thief.

The Good-Aligned Guild

This is a rarity. It has to be. Remember the *Player’s Handbook* definition of a rogue; someone who feels “that the world (and everyone in it) owes them a living.” Thieves are “the epitome of roguishness.” Most thieves want to do as little work as possible and live as well as possible off the efforts of others. This is not exactly a definition of good alignment. The major problem with a good-aligned guild is simple: The large majority of thieves are not of good alignment. If a good-aligned guild comes into being (e.g., a good-aligned guildmaster comes to power) then many, if not most, thieves will actively seek a non-good (preferably neutral) guild if the guildmaster seeks to impose the values of good on them.

What the intelligent good-aligned guildmaster will do is not to impose or accentuate the values of good within the guild. Rather, he will quietly squeeze evil thieves out, put them at risk, and try to make sure that evil activities (slavery, etc.) are downgraded or made to fail. Eliminating evil is much smarter than trying to establish good.

However some good-aligned guilds can certainly exist in the campaign world. A classic example is the “freedom fighter” guild, a guild which stresses the values of chaotic good, in a Lawful Evil country or state. Such a guild will attract thieves of CG, NG, and CN alignments, and pure Neutrals will go along as usual. Even chaotic evil thieves might join, hating the repressive lawfulness of the state (especially if the guild rulers have the sense to play up Chaos and freedom in their pitch). Such a guild is one with the classic Robin Hood (robbin’ hoods?) spirit. It could exist “underground” in an evil land such as the Scarlet Brotherhood lands (in Oerth) or Thay in the Forgotten Realms (FR6, *Dreams of the Red Wizards*), a secret urban organization with underground, hidden meeting-places and fearful helpers in high places—a superb setting for intrigue. A rural equivalent, with scout-type thieves allied with tough rangers and others combining their skills to chip at the edges of a strong evil state, is another example, more suited to players who like lots of combat and tactical skirmish gaming than political intrigues and tense urban chases and the like.

Other good-aligned guild possibilities exist, certainly, but require more careful thought by the DM. They are possible in a fractionated or oppositional guild structure, in a country where the good/evil division mirrors or parallels some other (e.g., good-aligned elves and predominantly evil-aligned humans), and possibly in super-goody-goody nations where they exist as security consultants and the like (but how do they accumulate their experience points for practicing their skills in earnest?).

Player-Character Guildmasters

This section is for DMs who have a PC in a campaign who has become a Guildmaster of Thieves. Holding a similar position (e.g., the most powerful member of a ruling council) can be handled with minor modifications of the system outlined here for determining guild numbers, activities, economics, brushes with the law, and similar events in the everyday story of thieving folk.

Determining Guildmembers

This can be done in three ways. First, the tables in the *Player’s Handbook* can be used (with tweaking to reduce the proportion of non-humans if this is too large for your campaign). Second, you can use tables (71, 12, 13) earlier in this book (the 11-15 row is suggested from Table 17). Or you

can use one of the systems, and introduce a few pet, individually scripted NPC thieves of your own into the results from the dice rolls. In particular, you may wish to design the deputy (assistant) guildmaster since this will be an NPC the PC will need to lean on a lot.

Guild Income

Table 22 below lists economic modifiers for societies of different wealth. These modifiers should be applied to all monetary sums referred to later—guild dues, cuts from planned jobs, and the like.

Table 22:
MODIFIERS TO GUILD INCOME

Social Wealth	Modifier
Very Poor	x 0.25
Poor	x 0.5
Fair	x 0.75
Average	none
Comfortable	x 1.2
Wealthy	x 1.5
Rich	x 2.0

The income the guild receives will come from two sources; guild dues, and the cut the guild takes from planned robberies, burglaries, heists, and the like. The system given here is a simple one for calculating month-by-month income; some optional extras are documented later.

Dues: These will be fixed as a yearly sum, payable anywhere from monthly to semi-annually (the thieves will prefer the latter). A reasonable base sum to work from is 30 gp per level as a yearly due, to a maximum of around 300 gp/year (for thieves of 10th or higher level). The guildmaster can take 5% of these dues as a personal fee, and his assistant will take the same (these two do not pay fees, nor do members of a ruling council unless democratically elected). The guildmaster can take up to 15%, but for every 1% above the 5% standard the morale of the guildmembers drops by -1. Extorting over 15% leads to immediate revolt! The rest of the income goes to the expenses of running the guild (bribes, buying equipment, paying fines, etc.).

Cuts: The guild is entitled to exact a levy on robberies and burglaries which it has some role in planning. The guildmaster doesn't have to plan these activities; his right- (and left-) hand men take the leading role in this. The levy can be taken as a base 10% (this is pretty much standardized. If a PC guildmaster wants to extort more, every extra 1% leads to a decline of -1 in morale; over -10 leads to immediate revolt). Of this 10%, the guildmaster gets 10%, as does his assistant—that is, 1% of the gross.

Table 23 shows how much money is gained per 10 thief-levels by a guild from this kind of guild-guided activity. The standard economic multiplier is used, and the dice roll result is multiplied by the total number of experience levels of guild operatives, divided by 10 (the guildmaster and his assistant, and any guildmembers not actively thieving, are excluded). So, a guild with six 3rd-level, six 2nd-level, and eight 1st-level thieves gets 4 dice rolls (total levels= 18 + 12 + 8 = 38. Fractions below one-half are rounded down, others up). Table 23 gives the gross; the guild gets 8% of this, the guildmaster and his assistant 1% each.

Table 23:
GUILD MONTHLY INCOME

d20

Roll Income per 10 Thief-levels

1-2	5d6 gp
3-5	5d8 gp
6-9	5d10 gp
10-11	8d10 gp
12-15	2d6 x 10 gp
16-18	3d6 x 10 gp
19	4d6 x 10 gp
20	6d6 x 10 gp
21	6d10 x 10 gp
22	10d10 x 10 gp
23+	12d12 x 10 gp

Modifiers to Dice Roll

- 2 if the attitude of the law is persecutory
- 1 if the attitude of the law is hassling
- +1 if the law is corrupt or tolerant
- 1 if the merchants attitude is one of warfare
- +2 if the merchants are submissive or infiltrated

Income Multipliers (see below)

- Easygoing operations: x 0.5
- Routine operations: x 0.8
- Average operations: x 1.0
- Pushy operations: x 1.5
- Aggressive operations: x 2.0

Levels of Operations

These are referred to in the multipliers following Table 23, above. They refer to the following instructions given by the guildmaster:

Easygoing: Guildmembers take life very easy. No morale modifiers.

Routine: Guildmembers take life fairly easy, but keep their hands in. A +1 modifier applies to morale for the first month (after this some of them get bored and touchy).

Average: The standard level of operations, no effects on morale.

Pushy: The guildmembers are pushed into doing some extra jobs here and there, and grand, ambitious activities are eagerly pursued. This gives +1 to morale for the first month (excitement), but -1 per month after the first if sustained, cumulative to a maximum of -4).

Aggressive: Guildmembers are told by the guildmaster to steal anything which isn't bolted to the floor. This has an immediate effect on morale of -2, to which -1 is added per month (cumulative) to a maximum of -10; at this point, a revolt is automatically triggered.

The more active the guild is, the more likely thieves are to be apprehended by the law, however!

The sums of money gained by the guildmaster this way will not be great, unless the guild is a large one, the community is rich, and/or the guildmaster uses aggressive thieving tactics. This is likely to be all the money for guildmaster-level thieves, so other activities must be used to generate income. These will need planning by the player in consultation with the DM. Reference should be made to

the *Player's Handbook* when considering the money side—how much shopkeepers can afford to pay as protection money, for example. These sums are usually lower than most players think! Making sure the target one strikes at is rich is a shrewd step in any thieflly activity.

The Long Arm of the Law

A monthly roll is made on Table 24 to determine whether there has been a confrontation with the law.

Table 24:
CONFRONTATIONS WITH
THE LAW I

d20

Roll	Result
1-16	No confrontation
17-20	Confrontation

Modifiers to Dice Roll

- +4 if attitude of law is persecutory
- +2 if attitude of law is hassling
- 2 if attitude of law is tolerant
- 4 if attitude of law is corrupt
- 3 if activity of guild is easygoing
- 1 if activity of guild is routine
- +2 if activity of guild is pushy
- +5 if activity of guild is aggressive
- +1 for each group of 10 thieves (round up) past the first 10 (maximum modifier +5)

Note that when rolling on the table above, a roll of natural 20 means a confrontation with the law, no matter what the modifiers may be.

If a confrontation arises, roll on Table 25 to determine the nature of the confrontation. Apply the same modifiers to the dice roll as for Table 24, except for the last one (the number of thieves modifier). Also, natural rolls of 1 and 20 are not subjected to modifiers on Table 25.

Table 25:
CONFRONTATIONS WITH
THE LAW II

d20

Roll	Result
1	Arrest of 1 thief (1st-level apprentice)
2-5	Arrest of 1 thief (level 1d2)
6-9	Arrest of 1d2 thieves (1st-level apprentices)
10-15	Arrest of 1d2 thieves (level 1d2)
16-18	Arrest of 1d2+1 thieves (levels 1d3)
19	Arrest of 1d3+1 thieves (levels 1d3)

- 20 Reroll, but thieves are killed
- 21-23 Arrest of 1d2+3 thieves, rolled at random from the active guildmember list
- 24+ As above, but there is a 50% chance for each thief of being killed

Any arrest of three or more thieves will reduce the morale of guildmembers by -1.

Clearly, it is useful if a guild can manage to corrupt the law somewhere along the line. It is up to the player of a PC guildmaster to set about corrupting the law, if it isn't corrupt already, and up to the DM to determine at what point the corruption has gone far enough to apply dice modifiers in the tables above.

Arrested Thieves: Different campaign worlds, and countries within the same campaign world, have very different legal systems and degrees of punishment. If the guildmaster wants to try and get his followers back by paying their fine, this is acceptable unless the DM rules otherwise (e.g., the country is Lawful Neutral and very punitive, the attitude of the law is persecutory or hassling, etc.). The fine payable is variable. The base fine is 30 gp, but modifiers can readily be applied. If the thief is of 3rd or higher level, double the fine (he probably has a record). If the guild's activity level was pushy, double the fine. If the guild's activity level was aggressive, multiply the fine by five. Finally, roll 1d4 and multiply the fine by this figure to get a final sum.

This is a fair shorthand rule which many DMs will want to detail further for themselves, but for an averagely active guild in an average sort of game milieu (if there is such a thing) an average fine of 75 gp, or 150 gp for a seasoned criminal, is not so much to pay. The guild can afford to pay half the fine (part of running expenses) up to 250gp, but the guildmaster has to fork out the rest from his personal wealth. A guildmaster who gets a thief out of jail by paying the fine, or by busting him out, gains the confidence of his followers, who add +1 to their morale for the next month. On the other hand, if the guild suffers a loss of several (3 or more) members there may be a morale drop of -1 or more (but the DM may waive this for large guilds).

Guild Morale

Unless there are special reasons to the contrary, the base morale for guildmembers will be 15 to begin with. If morale falls below this level, a morale check is called for. Failing the check means that 1d2 thieves leave the guild, to become freelancers elsewhere. This number can be modified. For each 2 points that morale falls below 14, add 1 extra deserter. If the 2d10 roll is 19 or 20 (natural; this is but a 3% chance), add an extra 1d4 deserters. Do not add alignment modifiers (for the PC) to these morale checks; standard morale checks (Table 16, *Player's Handbook*) give bonuses for being lawful/good and this is extremely implausible with thieves!

As an alternative, rather than leaving the guild, the thieves may put their grievances to the guildmaster, if a secret check against the guildmaster's Charisma is successful. They may ask for lower dues or cuts from their income, more resources from the guild, or as the DM determines. This is a fair step, if morale has fallen due to ill-fortune (arrests and other problems) rather than to the guildmaster having been reckless or careless.

If morale falls to 5 or lower, however, the guildmaster will be the subject of an open revolt and attempted putsch (and, at the DM's discretion, this may happen sooner if the PC is being cruel, arbitrary, reckless, or otherwise abusing his position).

New Followers

New followers may arrive, and a monthly check should be made for this. The chance is 10% for

each 10 (or part thereof) thieves already in the guild—for example, a guild with 27 thieves has a 30% chance each month of attracting a new follower. Modifiers to this base percentage chance are shown in Table 26.

Table 26:
MODIFIERS TO FOLLOWERS DICE ROLL

Morale, per point above 15: +10%
Morale, per point below 10: -10%
Guildmaster's Charisma: +2% per point above 12
Society is Rich: +10%
Society is Wealthy: +5%
Society is Poor: -5%
Society is Very Poor: -20%

Whatever the final percentage chances, no more than two new thieves will arrive in any single month. New arrivals are 1st-level apprentices, with the usual chance for being nonhuman and possibly multi-classed. The DM may allow greater chances for new recruits if the guildmaster goes on a recruiting drive after the guild has been weakened by arrests or some similar misfortune.

Special Events and Occurrences

These are the annoying unforeseen happenings which make life far from boring for any guildmaster. Allow a flat 1 in 6 chance per month of one event (rolled from Table 27) to take place. The DM must be prepared to do some necessary work fleshing out the event, and may add his own occurrences to those in the table. If an event is irrelevant, then no special event occurs that month.

Table 27:
SPECIAL EVENTS IN THIEVES' GUILDS

d20

Roll Special Event

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1 | Senior Thief from next town defects to your guild, asking for protection, brings minor magic item gift |
| 2 | Randomly selected guildmember kidnapped by evil adventurers, ransom note dispatched |
| 3 | Freak success with burglary: Guild gets extra income (d6 x 100 gp) but a good fence is needed |
| 4 | Junior thief manages to acquire a "Police Snitch" |
| 5 | Deputy Guildmaster is diseased/ cursed/kidnapped/caught by the authorities |
| 6 | 1d3 dumb thugs offer services to the |

- guild for a “retainer”; these fighters may be loyal, or are they stool-pigeons for some other organization?
- 7 Powerful NPC (a mage, perhaps) commissions tough break-in and burglary from the guild
 - 8 Guildhouse is located by the authorities; 50% chance a junior thief finds this out before the raid. DM must do much work here!
 - 9 Local assassins guild requests simple manpower help with a “little job” (that turns out to not so little . . .)
 - 10 NPC specialist of some kind (mage/ thief, quartermaster, brilliant cat burglar) arrives and applies for guild membership
 - 11 Randomly selected junior guildmember suffers accident which leaves him unable to thieve
 - 12 Guildhouse is burgled!!! Brilliant NPC outsider gets away with valuables (as recorded)!
 - 13 A mid-level thief, plus an apprentice, disappear; have they been kidnapped (no ransom), murdered, eaten by alligators in the sewers, *polymorphed*, plane shifted or suffered some worse fate?
 - 14 Failed assassination attempt is made against guildmaster—by whom?
 - 15 Thieves accidentally (or in panic) kill guards when committing robbery—attitude of the law will be persecutory (maybe gaining reinforcements) for next month
 - 16 Novice thief leaves guild (family moving, marries girl/boy from next village, etc.)
 - 17 Relations with Beggars’ guild worsen (if good) or improve (if bad)—actions of junior thieves (as determined by DM) are instrumental in this
 - 18 Burglary turns up magic item unusable by any guildmaster (for example, a clerical item)—the guild

- needs to trade it to get its value
(with a temple)
- 19 1d3 thieves beaten up and robbed
returning from a burglary, reduce
guild income by 25% this
month
- 20 PC's identity as guildmaster is known
to an outsider, who attempts to
blackmail the PC (he has some
physical evidence to back his
blackmailing)

Blueprint Profiles

It's time to meet a select body of august personages from diverse thieves' guilds. The NPCs here are presented with fine-grain detail, and they can be used in several ways. They can be used by any DM as "off the rack" NPCs ready for play, they can be slightly modified to suit the DM's ongoing campaign, or they can be used as an inspiration for the DM to devise his own NPCs along the same lines. These NPCs are also characters who will hold dominant positions in any thieves guild.

To give these NPCs a rounded, full character, each has been given a history and location within one of TSR's game worlds; Oerth, the world of Greyhawk, or Faerun, also known as the Forgotten Realms. If the DM does not wish to use these histories and locations, he can change them as he wishes, relocating the NPCs as desired.

Stats: Thief skill values listed include all bonuses from dexterity, race, non-use of armor, and magical items, as appropriate.

Guildmaster Septien Selfareine, the "White Lily"

AC 1 (*cloak of displacement, ring of protection +3, boots of striding and springing*); T 10/ M 9; hp 32; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type; Str 9, Int 17, Wis 16, Dex 17, Con 9, Cha 16; THAC0 see below; AL CG; SA quadruple damage on backstab, thief skills, *sword of dancing*, spells; SD thief skills, magical items (listed below), spells. Languages spoken: Common, no align languages, elven, gnome, halfling, thieves cant. Thief skills: PP 60, OL 80, FRT 75, MS 85, HS 80, DN 40, CW 70, RL 30. Experience Point Total: 212,465 (in each class).

Spells usually memorized: *charm person, feather fall, protection from evil, sleep, forget, invisibility, knock, dispel magic, fly, spectral force, dimension door, wizard eye, teleport.*

Weapon Proficiencies: dagger, longsword, short bow, shortsword.

Nonweapon Proficiencies: artistic ability (Wis; composition), disguise (Cha; double proficiency, checks at +1), etiquette (Cha), musicianship (Dex; stringed keyboard instruments).

Combat Stats: Melee: Base THAC0 16. Uses *shortsword* +2, +4 *versus dwarves* (THAC0 13/11, Dmg 1d6+2 (+4)/ 1d8+2). Also has *longsword of dancing*, THAC0 14 if hand-held, 16 if used in nondominant hand, 15 descending to 12 if used as a dancing weapon; Dmg 1d8 +1 to +4/1d12 +1 to +4.

Combat Stats: Missiles: Base THAC0 14. Uses *shortbow* +1 (THAC0 12, ROF 2, Dmg 1d6+1) and has 15 *arrows* +2 (THAC0 10, Dmg 1d6+3).

Additional Magic Items: *amulet of proof versus detection and location, periapt of proof versus poison +4, Nolzur's marvellous pigments (6 jars), rings of chameleon power and water walking, wand of secret door and trap location (52 charges).*

Physical Details: Age 37 (human equivalent approximately 28), height 5'11", weight 131 lbs, silver-blond hair, light blue eyes, very clear and somewhat pale skin, high cheekbones, long and slender limbs.

Key Idiosyncrasies: Septien has an infamous "ego signature," as explained below. He also has a real loathing of dwarves, and his shortsword is his most treasured magical item. He does not attempt to expel dwarves from his guild, but they do not advance easily, and Septien has even shopped one or two to the law by anonymous tip-offs.

Cover: Septien is a well-known and appreciated musician who gives well-attended public performances of his playing on harpsichord-like instruments.

Guild and Leadership: The Gryrax Guild has a complex/mix structure; the guildmaster co-rules with a ruling council of three. Septien's style of guildmastering is slightly weak (he shares power), just, and fairly populist (the council attends to general feelings within the guild and Septien listens to them).

History: Septien Selfareine is Guildmaster in Gryrax of the Principality of Ulek, of Oerth (in the World of Greyhawk). His identity as guildmaster is known only to the three members of the ruling council of this guild; he is known to everyone else as "White Lily." This pseudonym comes from a weakness he has for leaving a fresh white lily at the scene of his audacious burglaries.

Septien was born the illegitimate son of a minor female elven noble in Celene, where such a birth is no stigma. The half-elf's quick wits and skill soon brought him private training in magic from his doting mother, and he began adventuring early in life. The evils of the Pomarj, so close to Celene, offered ample opportunity for a mage to gain experience and prosper. But Septien's light-fingered talents found employment in the tolerant, liberal capital of Celene as well.

Septien made happy progress as mage and thief, all the while cultivating his social graces and musicianship. It took the ravages of a broken love affair with a haughty grey elf ballerina to drive Septien first to drink and then to exile. Septien grew lazy, fat, and depressed in the lands of Ulek, until the day his second love entered his life—the White Lily Diamond. Found in the Kron Hills, bought by the Prince of Ulek and exhibited at the Gryrax Palace of Culture, the heavily-guarded diamond was irresistible. Septien brought off a daring robbery, and left a flower behind; the origins of his name. He privately sold the gem back to the Prince for 25,000 gp, a fraction of its value, later. Septien does not want riches. He does not steal for the wealth. He steals for the joy of being skilled and smart enough to get away with it.

Septien avoided joining the thieves' guild for some years, but bumped into the acting guildmaster when the two decided to rob the same place at the same time. Septien was just putting his flower in place when the second thief arrived! The old guildmaster had just died, and to have the famous White Lily as guildmaster was a decision which unified the squabbling and divided membership and ruling council. Septien was drafted in, and somewhat regrets this. In truth, there is little burden on him, since the council makes all the day-to-day decisions and his freedom of action is little curtailed. But Septien regrets the day his identity was discovered. On the other hand, his increasing success as a musician (he is much in demand for concerts and as an accompanist) brings him good fees, public acclaim, and a steady rate of arrival of hopeful females at his secluded town house. There is word of his being made a Court Companion, the formal title given to an adviser to the Prince, who is thought to seek his views on elven and cultural affairs.

Septien in Game Play: As "White Lily," Septien is the classic mystery figure. PCs may have a wild range of adventures trying to find him, stop his robberies, foil his schemes, etc. Putting PCs up

against an enemy who will only wish to outsmart them, and will never kill unless he is forced to, will make a nice change of atmosphere. A medium-level thief needing training in Ulek might find that only Septien can train him, and part of the guildmaster's terms might be that the PC will have to find him first! Given his concerts, his liking for female company, and his activity as a mage (although he is not a member of the Mages guild of Ulek), there are several ways in which PCs can meet Septien while, at the same time, hunting the infamous White Lily!

Tactical Notes: With his amulet, Septien is almost impossible to scry. Adding his *ring of chameleon* power to his thief skills makes this no easier. His major advantage is his amazing ability to get into and out of places, and with spells such as *wizard eye* he does his best to scry places in advance. *Nolzur's marvellous pigments* are ideal for getting into places (hey presto! a door!) if Septien's half-elf skill and wand don't find the secret doors.

Septien does not use aggressive, damaging evocation-type spells and the like if at all possible. He prefers subtlety and guile, and a spell such as *spectral force* to cover his escapes (using *teleport* to his villa in dire necessity). Septien is not strong and has few hit points, and so he will avoid melee combat if possible. If he must fight, unleashing his *longsword of dancing* while he fights with his magical shortsword can make him quite formidable. However, his *cloak of displacement* makes it virtually certain that he will be able to escape at least a first blow in melee, and he often takes advantage of this to *teleport* (or *dimension door* if he has this spell memorized, having scried in advance with *wizard eye*) away. His magical boots also enable him to make fast escapes.

Guildmaster Tulmara Zir Bharann, "Cruelty's Mask"

AC -5 (*bracers of defense* AC3, *ring of protection* +2, *cloak of the bat*); MV 12 (15 as bat); T 16; hp 62; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type (+6 with *gauntlets of ogre* power in melee); Str 9 (18[00] with *gauntlets of ogre* power), Int 16, Wis 12, Dex 18, Con 15, Cha 15; THAC0 see below; AL NE; SA quintuple damage on backstab, thief abilities, *cloak of the bat*; SD thief skills, *necklace of adaptation*, *cloak of the bat*, *rod of alertness*, *ring of free action*. Languages spoken: Common, Thieves Cant. Thief skills: PP 25, OL 95, FRT 95, MS 95, HS 95, DN 90, CW 95, RL 65. Experience Point Total: 1,432,155.

Weapon Proficiencies: dagger, hand crossbow, longsword, quarterstaff, short bow, short sword.

Nonweapon Proficiencies: Appraising (Int), Disguise (Cha), Jumping (Str), Lip Reading (Int; double proficiency, +1 to checks), Rope Use (Dex), Tightrope Walking (Dex).

Combat Stats: Melee: Base THAC0 13. Usually uses gauntlets of ogre power together with longsword +2, +4 versus Good-aligned creatures in dominant (right) hand; gives THAC0 8, 6 versus Good enemies; Dmg 1d8+8 (+10)/ 1d12+8 (+10). Also possesses dagger of venom used in secondary hand; THAC0 11, dmg 1d4+7 (+9)/1d3+7 (+9) plus special (lethal poison).

Combat Stats: Missiles: Base THAC0 10; uses *short bow* +1 (THAC0 9; ROF 2; ranges 5/10/15; Dmg 1d6+1) and also has normal hand crossbow (THAC0 10, ROF 1; ranges 2/4/ 6; Dmg 1d3/ 1d2).

Additional Magic Items: *Bag of holding* (250 cu. ft. capacity), *censer of summoning hostile air elementals*, *oil of etherealness*, other minor magical potions (*ESP*, *healing*, etc.) as desired by the DM.

Physical Details: Age 38, height 5'5", weight 107 lbs., short-cut curly black hair, very dark brown eyes, tanned olive skin, dark complexion, ear-lobes virtually absent.

Key Idiosyncrasies: Tulmara suffers periodic blackouts, about once a month, each lasting 1d8 hours. She is wholly amnesic for what happens during this time. In her conscious personality, her

most striking feature is her dead-eyed, emotionless mask of a face when listening to others.

Cover: Tulmara is well-known as a merchant, dealing in staple commodities. Cloths, foodstuffs, and livestock are her major business interests. She has many people working for her and is rarely seen herself; this is not unusual in her homeland.

Guild and Leadership: The Zazesspur thieves' guild has a traditional single-guildmaster leadership. Tulmara's rule is strong, cruel, and despotic.

History: Tulmara Zir Bharann is Guildmaster of thieves in the city of Zazesspur, one of the "Big Four" cities of Tethyr in Faerun (see FR3, *Empires of the Sands*, for some further details on Zazesspur). She rules tyrannically over a large guild in this trade city, with some 140 thieves who are full-time members of the guild.

Tulmara was born into opulence. The Bharann family is one of the older, more important ones in Zazesspur, and Tulmara received an extensive training in commerce and merchant life when young. Her naturally greedy and selfish temperament was exacerbated by being spoiled as an only child, and made more strident by this early coaching in personal greed. Her physical brutality, however, is something of an oddball characteristic, perhaps a throwback to her great-great-grandfather. Old Sulmair Bharann suffered fits of maniacal violence, but Tulmara's brutishness is more coldly controlled. Her gauntlets of ogre power aid her considerably in this respect; if she strikes or flails someone, they know they've been hit! Importantly, Tulmara has never picked a pocket in her life. Such vulgar street crime is beneath her.

Soon after poisoning her parents to advance her inheritance, Tulmara began thieving. From her commercial work, she learned of the activities of other merchants, and began to plan and execute robberies of their premises. Expanding into blackmail and kidnapping, she was recruited into the thieves' guild by an early paramour, Arkail Rhassan. These two became rising stars in the guild, arranging for the old guildmaster to have an "accident" and then taking over the Guild themselves. The Guild prospered, and became wealthy; the junior thieves and apprentices, subjected to harsh discipline, could accept it if the rewards were good. And they were.

Arkail was killed, murdered by an assassin; Tulmara has not been able to find out why (it was on the orders of the Shadow Thieves of Amn, who feared the rise of the Zazesspur Guild). Since this time, Tulmara has become more withdrawn and harsh, more cruel and evil, and more paranoid; the killing destroyed what little humanity remained in her. Now she strengthens the guild, and indulges herself in a few big heists, to pass the time; her heart is empty, her zest for life almost wholly gone. Her odd nickname in certain quarters—"Cruelty's Mask"—comes from a middling-rank guild member who knew of her cult sympathies (see below), contrasting them with the lifeless persona and deadpan facial expression of his Guildmaster.

Tulmara is a devotee of Loviatar, and attends secret ceremonies and rituals of that faith. She rules her guild absolutely, and she rules it through fear. She respects only force and power in other people; intelligence, wisdom, and other gentler qualities are held for nothing. She has the force to back her cruel edicts, and while the Guild juniors suffer—and no few flee the land—the fear of her is so widespread that she stays in control of her guild, at least for the time being.

In Zazesspur, there are some notable political intrigues involving royalists of various persuasion (see *Empires of the Sands*). Tulmara doesn't get involved in this; and allied with her guild's predominant preying on outsiders and foreigners, this has allowed the Zazesspur guild (and Tulmara) to grow strong and powerful without the authorities getting too fearful.

Tulmara in Game Play: Tulmara makes for excellent intrigue adventures, and is a good nemesis figure if crossed (paranoids always fit the bill on this count). It may take the PCs many adventures even to realize she is at the center of activities they are fighting against. It should be very hard to find her, even harder to pin her down and overcome her. PCs might be terrorized by Tulmara's servants,

hired to recover someone kidnapped by her, paid to act as bodyguards or couriers who are later attacked by thieves instructed by Tulumara, and the like. Tulumara strikes ruthlessly at those who thwart her, and since the scope of her operations is very wide, she can be thwarted in many ways!

The key element is always to make PCs work hard to get closer to the identity of their nemesis. Tulumara's identity as guildmaster is known to few, and the familiar working up the ladder from apprentices or thugs, to middle-rank people, and then closing in on the heart of the operation should be the PCs' goal. Even then, gaining any proof of Tulumara's activities should be very difficult.

Tactical Notes: Tulumara's own lair is protected by her *rod of alertness* (used as a magical alarm) and by her *censer of summoning hostile air elementals* which is used as a trap (opening a certain door causes a lever to fall, oil to pour along a narrow channel and be set alight, and then the oil runs into the censer, lighting it). Other magical alarms (*magic mouths* and the like) and numerous mechanical traps are present. A permanent *stinking cloud* in a corridor leading direct to her personal chamber can be bypassed by her with the magical necklace she wears, but could be a problem for PCs! Tulumara favors the use of many secret doors in her personal lair, below her private villa.

In combat, Tulumara always uses the sneak backstab when she can, but is not scared to slug it out toe-to-toe even with a plate-clad warrior. With her armor class and her magical gauntlets, she is a fearsome fighter. Her escape routes (notably *oil of etherealness* and her magical cloak) are important, likewise her protections against certain attack forms (the *ring of free action* makes her immune to *hold* spells, the *necklace of adaptation* protects against gases, and so on). Tulumara often spies on people in the form of a bat, and the powerful webs she can cast from her cloak of the bat don't affect her (*ring of free action*). Tulumara has a fortune stashed away in various business premises, and can summon up a bunch of thugs to attack her enemies at very short notice, both guildmembers and hired mercenaries.

Quartermaster Marmel Raveiz

AC 7 (unarmored) or 4 (*leather armor +1*); MV 12; M 4/ T 8; hp 26; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type -1 (usually 1d4+1/ 1d3+1 with dagger +2); Str 7, Int 17, Wis 14, Dex 17, Con 11, Cha 10; THAC0 18 (16 with *dagger +2*); AL N; SA triple damage on backstab, thief skills, spells; SD thief skills, *ring of blinking*, *ring of immunity to enchantment* (see below), spells. Languages spoken: Common, thieves cant. Thief skills: PP 45, OL 45, FRT 30, MS 40, HS 40, DN 45, CW 70, RL 70 (skill values not adjusted for armorless state). Experience Point Total: 12,045 (as mage), 94,130 (as thief).

Spell books (usually memorized spells in bold): *cantrip*, *charm person*, ***detect magic***, *friends*, ***hypnotism***, ***identify***, *message*, *protection from evil*, *spider climb*, *unseen servant*; *alter self*, *detect invisibility*, *ESP*, *forget*, *invisibility*, ***know alignment***, *magic mouth*, *rope trick*, *scare*, *wizard lock*.

Weapon Proficiencies: dagger, longsword, quarterstaff, one unlearned.

Nonweapon Proficiencies: Appraising (Int; triple proficiency, all checks at +2), forgery (Dex; DM may use Int for detecting other people's forgeries), heraldry.

Additional Magic Items: *bags of holding* (2 x 250 cu. ft., one of 150 cu. ft., one of 70 cu. ft.), *wand of identification with 44 charges* (see below).

Physical Details: Age 41, height 5'8", weight 132 lbs., long and lank stringy fair hair, green-blue eyes, weathered pale skin, slightly hooked nose, long fingers with knobby, large knuckles.

Key Idiosyncrasies: Marmel has a paranoid belief pertaining to servants of a long-dead master seeking him out to kill him, as explained below. More mundanely, he has an inordinate fondness for humbugs and will cheerfully suck his way through a large bag of them given the chance. As a result,

most of his teeth have fallen out, and his speech contains many breezily gumless sibilants.

Cover: None; Marmel spends his time in hiding; see below.

Guild and Leadership: The Monmurg thieves' guild has a complex/mix structure—specifically, it has a ruling council (of 4) elected by allegedly democratic elections from the guild membership for 7-year terms. The leadership style of this council is strong, just, and populist. Marmel isn't much affected by all this, because he doesn't get involved in guild politics and council members (of whatever persuasion) appreciate his loyalty and usefulness to the guild.

History: Marmel Raveiz is quartermaster of the thieves' guild in Monmurg, capital city of the Hold of the Sea Princes in Oerth (see *World of Greyhawk* for some additional details). He keeps the magical items the guild possesses as a group, stocks of specialist thief equipment, and ledgers and accounts of the guild (membership dues and the like). These are all retained in his *bags of holding*. Marmel is not an expert fence, although he may use his Appraising proficiency to purchase and check items for the guild.

Marmel began life as an apprentice to a Furyondian mage, and had to suffer ill-treatment as the mage developed an insidious form of insanity. His master refused to allow Marmel to make his own way in the world, but the unfortunate apprentice got his chance when the mage was forced to accompany a Furyondian naval foray against some of the declining piratical force of the Sea Princes. Their ship was sunk, and Marmel took the opportunity to kill his hateful and cruel master, grab a couple of travelling spell books with low-level spells, and *levitate* to safety. The pirates decided to capture him rather than shoot him down, their own flying mage bringing down the unhappy apprentice, and Marmel became a reluctant pirate.

As piracy declined in the Sea Prince's lands, Marmel stayed with bad company in the form of thieves. His magic helped them, and they trained him. Marmel got safety and obscurity, staying in the guild house, in return for learning the skills of the thief. Marmel was very fearful that his old master might have been raised; his mage's guild might come looking for him; the old mage's relatives might come for him; in short, obscurity suited Marmel perfectly. It even overcame his fear of going robbing by night, and Marmel began an adventuring life anew as a thief, not wanting to work further as a mage, lest those he feared would be looking for a hapless young mage should find him and punish him for killing his master.

Marmel is not now an active, adventuring thief. He is too valuable to the guild to be allowed to risk this. Happily, he has retired to a life of quartermastering. He maintains and administers the finances of the guild, and shepherds supplies and magical items for use by guild members. The availability of supplies is always good, due to Marmel's lines of supply and meticulous checks on his stocks. He also evaluates items brought in to the guild house by thieves, who must pay a 10% flat tithe of all earnings to the guild. Marmel's tripled Appraising proficiency makes him highly valuable in this respect. He routinely uses detect magic on anything which looks even remotely interesting. He can use an identify spell, and also has a wand of identification (duplicates the effects of an identify spell, with no Con loss to the mage) if several items turn up at once and the "owner" is in a hurry for any reason (he is reluctant to use his wand, since he can't recharge it, and charges 150 gp per charge for this service). If he is curious or suspicious about a guild member, or a seller to the guild, he will use investigative spells (or hypnotism) to learn more.

Marmel is a gentle enough soul, rather other-worldly at times. He likes a spot of haggling, although it's almost impossible to get the better of him. He has a strange fondness for heraldry, and may purchase items with unusual heraldic design for himself. He has a modest fortune from his own thieving days, and is paid a good salary by the guild. He rarely leaves the guild house, and when he does it is in the guise of a merchant's clerk (often accompanied by a guildmember who has a cover identity as a merchant).

Marmel in Game Play: Meeting Marmel is obviously easiest for guildmembers. They pay their tithes to him (10 gp per year for an apprentice, 50 gp per level per year from others to a maximum of 500 gp), may bring items to him to be valued, and come to him for supplies, or even the loan of magical items. Non-guildmembers can meet him for the sale or exchange of items, come across him at a sale of heraldic items, in an antique shop, or even possibly for training (for thief PCs)—at a very steep price!

A major role for any quartermaster is as a source of supplies. The DM can use a quartermaster to introduce new equipment items (the guild needs cash and the quartermaster is on a sales drive). “Hot” magic items (e.g., a sword with a non-erasable and unique design feature) can be sold to the quartermaster. New magic items could be had for sale (rarely), or exchange (more likely), or even borrowed for a security deposit. The DM should arrange these practicalities as he sees fit. You don’t need tables of random determinations; you should use a quartermaster to bring in pet ideas, items you think are nifty, as you want to. Marmel has placed a *magic mouth* on each of his bags of holding, of course, so that if anyone other than him even touches them the magic mouth will scream out, “Get your paws off!” Of course, maybe after all these years a relative of the Furyondian mage wants to know where the apprentice who killed his uncle (say) has gone with those spell books, and the PCs are hired to do the job. Who would expect to find him in a thieves’ guild??

Tactical Notes: Marmel is protected against undue influence. His *ring of immunity to enchantment* makes him immune to enchantment/charm spells of 4th level or below. His *ring of blinking* helps to protect him. Marmel isn’t much of a fighter, and the guild will usually have some bodyguards with him in the event of major transactions or trips into the outside world. Marmel does not take his *bags of holding* outside the guildhouse with him!

Durdlan Silverpalm, Master Fence

AC 4 (dwarf-sized *leather armor* +2); MV 9; T 5; hp 28; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type +1 (usually 2d4+2/ d6+3 with *broadsword* +1); Str 16, Int 15, Wis 11, Dex 16, Con 16, Cha 11; THAC0 18 (17 with magical sword); AL N; SA triple damage on backstab, thief skills; SD thief skills, 60' infravision, *rings of mind shielding and invisibility*. Languages spoken: Common, dwarf, gnome. Thief skills: PP 40, OL 40, FRT 50, MS 15 (95+*), HS 30, DN 45, CW 50, RL 15. Experience Point Total: 19,620.

Weapon Proficiencies: dagger, broad sword, quarterstaff.

Nonweapon Proficiencies: Appraising (Int; double proficiency, checks made with +1 bonus), Forgery Detection (use Int), Gather Information (Int).

Additional Magic Item: *Boots of elvenkind**.

Physical Details: Age 144 (human equivalent 52); height 4’4”; weight 162 lbs; long wavy black hair, thick beard plaited with gold threading, very large hands with thick, sausage-like fingers, strikingly bad breath.

Key Idiosyncrasies: Durdlan has an amazing number of pet animals and is very fond of them. He does use them to smuggle things inside and to send messages with, but he also simply likes animals a great deal. In cages in his back yard, attic, etc., he has pigeons, ferrets, guinea pigs, chickens (Durdlan likes omelettes), hamsters, a sleek black rat named Nasher which does tumbling tricks, small black rock lizards, and a pair of small flightless birds from Nesme which are brightly colored and awesomely stupid. Nasher is often in Durdlan’s waistcoat pocket or in the kitchen hunting scraps (PCs are warned not to eat any of Durdlan’s omelettes or anything else prepared here). Durdlan also has a horrible collection of pottery and ceramic halflings in a large glass-fronted display cabinet.

Cover: Durdlan has a primary cover and a secondary cover; this is a complex business, explained fully below.

Guild and Leadership: The thieves' guild of Mirabar is ruled by a single guildmaster, whose style of rulership is strong, moderately cruel, and moderately despotic. Durdlan operates independently of the guild, and is a consultant to them, so this doesn't unduly trouble him.

History: Durdlan Silverpalm is a fence who works closely with the thieves' guild of Mirabar in the northwest of Faerun (see FR5, *The Savage Frontier*, for details). The guild here is small—some 25-40 thieves at any given time will be in this large city—but trade through Durdlan is brisk. Durdlan owns a couple of moneylender and pawnbroker shops, and lives in a small terraced house in a street of granite houses all occupied by dwarves (there are some 4,000 dwarves in Mirabar). His primary cover is as a moneylender, and his family has long been engaged in this trade, hence their surname. Other family members are moneylenders, pawnbrokers, and locksmiths, and Durdlan has a share in several of these, including his brother Glengar's famous Rig-A-Mortice locksmith's shop. Durdlan thus has a primary cover as a moneylending small businessman.

Durdlan also has a secondary cover, a screen cover. He has been seen in disreputable company in Mirabar once too often in his 144 years, and the wily dwarf realizes that he cannot escape the scrutiny of the law all the time. So, Durdlan runs a small numbers racket (illegal and unlicensed gambling) betting on various events—rat races (literally), ship sailing rates and arrival times and the like. The authorities thus know that Durdlan is a bad sort, but believe that he is just a small-time gambler and thus don't bother him much. Durdlan's screen cover (a petty crook to cover for his real big-time crook identity) works perfectly. The thieves Durdlan meets now and then in back alleys (seen by the agents of the authorities) also see the dwarf in the reinforced cellars of his home—unseen by the authorities. There, they bring goods for sale and trade.

Durdlan's primary specialty is gemstones and jewelry. Appraising such items, Durdlan is 95% likely to have an accurate estimate of their value. His secondary specialty is barbarian relics and icons—items of antique nature, religious significance, or exceptional workmanship. With such items, from the Uthgardt barbarians of the north, Durdlan is 90% likely to estimate their value correctly. With all other items a standard Appraising test (Int+1, roll 16 or below) is made. When he is wrong, allow him an Int test. If this is made, he knows his estimate is uncertain and he will state a value some 50% of his original estimate. An incorrect estimate will be from 10-40% above the true value or 10-50% below it (perceived value= 50% of actual value, plus dice roll x10%. A roll of 0 is taken as zero).

Durdlan offers a percentage of the true value of a hot item to his supplier. This is usually approximately 30-50%, depending on the "hotness" of the item, its absolute value (it is harder to sell very pricey items in many cases), the Charisma of the seller (no more than +4% for this), and the like. If the DM is very uncertain, simply offer 30+1d20%.

Durdlan can dispose of hot property fast because he has connections with many merchant families in Mirabar who aren't too fussy about where their secret treasures come from. Indeed, the strongly competitive nature of these families means that they are often eager to have better relics and treasures than other families, or even to steal their rivals treasures and enjoy them in illicit secrecy. One of Durdlan's favorite memories is of selling a sapphire and emerald brooch from Evereska to five different families, for ever-increasing profit margins, within the space of a single year, as each family in turn commissioned thieves to steal the item from their neighbors. Durdlan made sure that when the brooch was secretly held by one family, the next rival along the social line got to hear of it.

Durdlan has many friends in the dwarven merchant community who regularly dispatch wagon trains to Luskan on the coast. These caravans rarely get thoroughly searched; the guards have scruples which are alcohol—soluble provided a few gold coins are put their way. This access to a

major coastal port (where again the customs guards can easily be bought off) gives Durdlan the chance to sell his goods for export, where their identity as stolen goods will not be known.

Durdlan is also ready, for a fat fee, to trade in human cargoes. That is, he will conceal people in his home (locking them into a cellar), and smuggle them out of Mirabar (usually in barrels or boxes bound for Luskan). Durdlan is believed to have helped one or two assassins in this way in his time.

Durdlan in Game Play: Durdlan has only a handful of contacts from the thieves' guild, almost all dwarves. He never trusts elves (he denies vehemently that his *boots of elvenkind* are anything of the sort, claiming they are boots of silent dwarfcraft) and he avoids direct contact with almost anyone, working through intermediaries. He will try to stay invisible during a meeting if he can. He certainly doesn't like the location of his home being known.

Durdlan is a fine fence to sell many items to, and he rarely attempts to swindle his customers. He is the person to see for a fast escape from the city. He is also a moneylender, of course, and can be encountered in that guise. His love of animals or bizarre fondness for ceramic halflings could also be exploited to bring him into contact with PCs (not necessarily as a fence).

Durdlan also has connections; in wealthy merchant families, the thieves' guild, other merchants, the dwarven community, an assassin or two, and amongst officers, guards, and similar men who will look the other way if enough gold is put in their pockets. If Durdlan can't do something for a paying customer, the odds are that he knows a man who can. This makes him a very versatile walking game mechanic for any DM.

Chapter 5: Tools of the Trade

Equipment for the Thief's Skills

Zondervan leaned away from the thick oaken door regretfully. "I can't hear a word of what's being said in there," he said miserably. His mentor Raimen smiled at him and reached into the voluminous folds of his robe. Hardly the time for a conjuring trick, the miserable apprentice thought. But Raimen swiftly flourished a polished bronze hemisphere topped with a cone, the open surface of the hemisphere wrapped about with a thin metal mesh. With only the hint of a flourish, he placed the end of the cone to his right ear and leaned closer to the door, gently placing the mesh-covered surface to the wood. A smile with just the slightest hint of smugness beamed from the older thief's face.

"Try again," Raimen urged his apprentice. Zondervan craned his neck closer and placed the cone against his own ear. Now he could hear the Guildmaster's voice—faintly, to be sure, but the words were clear enough . . .

"Just one thing, Master," Zondervan said in a newly-respectful tone on the way to the Footpad for an ale, "what is the wire mesh for?"

"To keep the ear seekers out, of course," Raimen said mildly. "The Guildmaster is very fond of using them as a defense against snoopers."

"But—but before you gave me the listening cone I . . . I tried to listen anyway, I placed my ear against the door . . .," cried the apprentice, suddenly aghast.

"Indeed you did," Raimen replied coolly. "Better nip off and see the clerics for a cure disease spell. I get ten per cent of their fees in such cases, you know. See you later, I trust . . ."

A wide variety of special equipment items are available for thieves if they know where to look for them. This chapter details many such items. Many of these will be specific to particular thief

skills and are listed for each skill. The use of lockpicks with the Open Locks skill is an obvious example. There are also many miscellaneous items which thieves are particularly likely to find useful in their work, and there is a full listing of these items also. A tabular summary of likely prices and encumbrance values can be found at the end of this chapter.

All this isn't to say that only thieves should be allowed to use the items detailed here, of course. In some cases, other characters cannot use these items effectively. Lockpicks are useless for picking locks in the hands of anyone but a thief, for this skill is specifically (and exclusively) a thief skill. Many other items do not necessarily have such restricted use. For example, the use of tar paper (see below for a full detailing of this) could potentially be useful for characters other than thieves. But such an item is particularly likely to be encountered in the subculture of thieves, and to be used by them when going about their nefarious activities. Also, taking a lively interest in equipment items which assist stealth, concealment, silent break-ins to places where you shouldn't be, and suchlike is naturally part of the role-playing of thieves. Brave, hardy warriors and pious priests really shouldn't be interested in such matters!

In the full equipment listing below, it is entirely for the DM to determine whether certain items may or may not be available in the campaign world. For example, as noted in the *Player's Handbook*, combination locks may well not exist in a world based on medieval times, and thus the use of a small listening cone to assist in opening such locks would be irrelevant in such a game world. Then again, certain items may well be available but not openly so. Only from shadowy, illegal sources and suppliers will such items as lockpicks be available. Availability of many items will depend on the nature of the society the thief operates within, as detailed in the chapter on Guilds.

Since the items detailed below are not included in the *Player's Handbook*, they can be introduced to PC thieves in different ways. Going on a job with an NPC thief who uses one or two specialty items is one way of educating a PC thief. A second possibility is regular attendance at the informal "seminars" of the Thieves' Guild—make that PC go back to high school! A third possibility is during training; part of a thief's training by a higher-level thief may include being told about a small number of items relevant to thief skills. If the PC is allocating a large slice of his 30 percentage points for improving one skill (often the case), then information about 1d3 items relevant to the use of that skill and also 1d2 miscellaneous items can be regarded as part of what the PC is paying for during his training. A fourth and final possibility—an entertaining one—is that the PC hears about such items from popular stories and tales concerning a legendary master thief NPC in the campaign world, or even from overhearing some officers of the law discussing such matters at the next table in the tavern!!

Skill Modifiers

Many equipment items detailed below will be stated to give a modifier to the chance for success for a skill check. The skill modifiers should be treated as suggestions only, although for game balance it's probably best not to give bonus modifiers to a thief much greater than those suggested. In any event, a central rule which always operates is that the maximum chance for success after all modifiers are applied (for race, dexterity, conditions, equipment, etc.) is 95%; a "natural" roll of 96-00 on d100 always fails!

You might also wish to allow an analogous 1% chance for success—a natural 01 always succeeds, regardless of modifiers. The poor 1st-level thief trying to pick a masterful-quality lock in the dark with improvised lockpicks rolls—01! He's done it! The lock clicks open . . .

In some cases, different items of equipment may each add to some chance for success when climbing walls, opening locks, etc. In the case of nonmagical items, a general rule should be that no more

than a total of +20 can be added to any chance for success in such a skill test, no matter how many items are employed to assist the thief's natural talent. The DM may also not allow additive modifiers if items have a similar function. An obvious case would be the use of climbing daggers and spikes for assisting the climb walls skill; the thief could not add the individual modifiers for these two equipment items together and claim an extra bonus, since they both do the same thing (although they have important, individual, additional uses).

Picking Pockets

This skill is usually practiced by simple manual dexterity and swiftness. Even so, there is a small number of simple items which can help the thief in this art.

Arm Sling

This is simply a cloth sling; the thief wears it to appear as if he has a broken or injured arm, and speedily withdraws his hand from it for the pocket-picking attempt.

This actually reduces the chances of picking pockets by 5%, but the payoff is that the chances for being discovered are halved (but a natural 00 on d100 always means discovery). This reflects the fact that people simply do not expect to see a man with a broken arm picking pockets and the expectation determines the perception. The use of this unusual strategy is only useful—but it is really useful here—when the priority is not to be discovered, rather than to be sure of success. A thief working in a city where he is not a guild member, or one where legal penalties for picking pockets are very harsh, might favor the use of this ruse.

A thief obviously cannot use this ruse for an extended period of time in the same place (save possibly by posing as a beggar). There is a limit to how long an arm can plausibly need for healing, after all.

Mini-Blade

This is a generic term for a very small (and usually very sharp) blade which can be held (with care!) between the fingers or in the “edge of the hand”. A very sharp coin-edge, filed down, can be used in this way, and has the advantage of being readily available. A more sophisticated (and rarer) version is the razor ring, a hollow signet ring with a flip-top and a very sharp blade within.

The mini-blade is used to cut a soft container—most obviously a purse or pouch—so that the thief can get at what's inside it. It is the most effective technique for getting at coins, gems, etc., inside a purse with drawn and tied strings. With a mini-blade the thief only has to make a simple pick pockets roll to effect the larceny. If the thief has, instead, to try to open the purse strings and then extract what's inside because he has no mini-blade, this needs two pick pockets rolls for success (one to open the purse, one to get at the goodies)—and two rolls for being observed, as well!

Opening Locks

Lockpicks

These are essential for the thief to use this skill at anything like his “natural” ability level. It is these items which are listed in the *Player's Handbook* as Thieves' Picks, costing 30 gp. They are usually short lengths of rigid wire and flat, narrow plates of iron or steel, especially designed and made for dealing with locks, and there will be a dozen or so to a set. They will be supplied either on

a ring (like keys) or in a cloth or leather wallet which unrolls. These items will never be freely available on the open market.

Improvised Lockpicks

Lockpicks are made for the job, but it is possible for a resourceful thief to improvise a lockpick from a length of wire, a hairpin or hat pin, or some similar ready-to-hand item. Obviously, this will never be anywhere as good as the specially-crafted item, but it's better than nothing. As stated in the *Player's Handbook*, a penalty of anywhere from -5 to -60 can be applied to the use of such improvised lockpicks. The following suggestions are given for the DM to select within this range.

To create improvised lockpicks the thief must make an Intelligence check, modified (positively!) by his experience level—reflecting the resourcefulness greater experience brings. If this check is successful, the improvised items can be used with a penalty of -5 to -30 (1d6x5) to the open locks roll. If the modified Intelligence check is failed, the thief can bodge up something, but it is a feeble effort—the penalty is -35 to -60 (1d6x5, +30) for the Open Locks attempt. Locks which are of Masterful quality, however, cannot be opened with improvised lockpicks (unless the DM allows the 01=success rule here).

Critical Failure: When opening locks, either with lock picks or with improvised lock picks, the DM may rule that on a skill check roll of 96-99 the tool snaps but can be wangled out of the lock if a Dexterity check is made; on a roll of 00 the snapped tool is wedged in the lock and cannot be removed (save for disassembling the whole lock!).

Special Rule, Combination Locks: The DM may wish to allow the existence of these complex locks in his campaign world. If he does, then such locks are always of Superior or Masterful quality. As an optional rule, a thief who makes a successful detect noise roll when trying to open such locks can halve the usual negative modifier to his skill for such formidable locks, as he is able to detect the sound of tumblers falling!

Acid

If a thief is faced with a lock which his best efforts cannot pick open, metal-eating acid is one alternative. Such acids will eat through locks if the locks fail a saving throw (for metal) vs. acid (this save is 13). If the save is made, the lock cannot be opened, but it will be ruined (and unopenable!) if a second save (metal vs. acid) is failed. Use of such acid is difficult and avoided by most thieves, for various reasons.

Use of metal-eating acids is difficult because only acids of great strength will do the job effectively. The DM should greatly restrict the availability of such acid; acids of the strength of black dragon acid and thessalhydra acid (possibly also giant slug spittle) are among the few known effective metal-eaters. Thus, availability is very low (and cost very high).

Thieves usually avoid such acids in any event. First, the acid is very hazardous to carry. While it may be contained in glass containers (and possibly ceramic), such vessels are fragile. Imagine falling down a pit and hearing the sound of breaking glass as double-strength acid begins to seep through clothing and over one's back . . .

Second, if the acid does not do the job it may ruin the lock and any hope of opening it in another way, as described. Third, it is a calumny on the professional reputation of a thief to have to resort to such means as acids!

Chisels

A thief may attempt to force a lock open with a lock chisel and a small hammer. This is not really a highly skilled activity, and the DM might consider extending this to non-thieves. The base chance for success is equal to the open doors percentage (which is Strength-based, of course). A thief may add one-fifth of his open locks chance to this base chance—knowing something about locks does give a slight advantage here. Obviously, forcing a lock is a noisy activity and any hope of subtlety and surprise evaporates with the first blow.

Cutters, Files and Hacksaws

These instruments may have to be resorted to if a thief cannot pick a lock, but thinks he has the time to try these desperately slow methods for bypassing the lock. With a file or hacksaw blade the thief can try to saw through the lock apparatus; a pair of small wire cutters may also be useful for disabling some part of the internal mechanism. Usually, only reasonably small locks can be cut through in this way. It may also be possible for the thief to cut around a lock with a hacksaw blade.

Again, use of such instruments is often fairly noisy (although nowhere near as noisy as using a lock chisel). The main drawback to cutting through or around locks is that it takes a very, very long time. In most cases the attempt will be certain to succeed, unless there are special circumstances—e.g., the thief has only one small rusty file and the lock is a huge combination lock device!

Magnifying Glass/Lens

At the DM's discretion, using such an item to inspect a lock may add 5% to a thief's chance to open the lock. This only applies if the thief has some element of the lock apparatus exposed to his view—if he can see something of the inner workings of the lock.

Oil and Funnel

Some locks may grow rusty with age and disuse, and be harder to pick than new locks of the same quality of make would be. Seasoned thieves know only too well that the locks of doors in dungeons are all too often of this sort. The DM may apply modifiers (-5, -10, etc.) to the open locks chance for such doors as he sees fit. Rusted and even fairly dirty locks may have a little light oil applied to their insides, usually with the use of a long-necked funnel (and maybe with a short length of rubbery tubing on the end of that). The negative modifier may itself be negated, in whole or in part, by such lubrication. It takes 1 round to apply the oil and 5-10 (d6+4) rounds for the oil to have its effect on the mechanism.

Of course, using oil to lubricate a lock helps the thief to open it silently. If the DM wants to make a silent movement check for lock-picking, it should be made at +10 if oil is used. Oil is also useful when it comes to rusty door hinges in this context.

Time Scales

Picking a lock takes 1d10 rounds, as stated in the *Player's Handbook*. If the thief has no lockpicks or is using improvised lockpicks, this duration becomes 1d20 rounds.

Other ways of bypassing locks take rather longer. Using a lock chisel and hammer takes one turn; metal-eating acid takes 3d6 rounds; cutting around a lock takes 2d6 turns (assuming that the door is a wooden one of average thickness); cutting through a lock takes 3d6 turns. The DM may roll ran-

domly for time needed, or may select a value within the range shown which reflects the quality and size of the lock. Size will most affect acid and cutting round a lock, whereas quality will affect cutting through a lock, as regards time needed.

Finding and Removing Traps

Because the nature of traps can vary, a wide range of equipment might conceivably be helpful on different occasions; a magnifying glass, for example, might help with concealed traps. There are many items for which a DM might allow a +5% modifier to the find/remove traps roll. This needs a DM decision on a case-by-case basis. There is one exception: lockpicks, which are important in a wide range of cases.

Lockpicks

These may be considered as necessary for discovering small traps which are affixed to locks. Without them, the thief cannot use his find traps skill nor his remove traps skill for dealing with such traps. Improvised lockpicks have a -30 penalty to both skill rolls. The kind of traps involved here are small poisoned needles inside drawers or coffers; spring-triggered poison dart traps inside containers; and so on.

Moving Silently

Footpads

These useful equipment items have even had a type of robber named after them, of course. Footpads can be improvised from rags or cloth tied to the feet, or built into footwear—the latter obviously negates any risk of cloth falling off!

Footpads are not considered standard equipment worn by the thief because of the disadvantage they have. Their advantage is that they add +5 to the chance for moving silently; the corresponding disadvantage is that footpads reduce traction, and so their use adds a -5 penalty modifier to any climb walls roll the thief has to make while wearing them. Cat burglars are advised to use detachable footpads which can be donned after getting over the wall on the way in!

As an aside, the normal, unmodified move silently chance assumes that the thief is wearing normal, everyday footwear. If for some reason he is wearing hob-nailed boots or the like the DM may readily apply a penalty modifier of -10, -20 or so to any attempt to move silently.

Silenced Armor

A special form of silenced elfin chain is available to the thief. Such armor has each individual link of chain armor wrapped in thin leather or light cloth binding. This to some extent “silences” the armor, at the cost of increasing its encumbrance by one-third above that of normal elfin chain. It is also fiendishly expensive, costing more than plate mail. Of course, it is even rarer than ordinary elfin chain itself. Finding a craftsman and persuading him to make such a suit of armor could be a challenging adventure in itself for a thief. The total profile for silenced elfin chain is shown in Table 28 below.

Table 28:
SILENCED ARMOR (ELFIN CHAIN)

EFFECT ON SKILL

Pick Pockets	-25
Open Locks	-5
Find/Remove Traps	-5
Move Silently	—
Hide in Shadows	-10
Detect Noise	—
Climb Walls	-25
Read Languages	—

Bonuses for moving silently and hearing noise above those which apply for normal elfin chain are somewhat offset by penalties to picking pockets and climbing walls. Silenced elfin chain is particularly useful to a thief for whom subterfuge and sneaking around unobserved are very important, but who suspects that there is a high probability of combat at some stage during his mission!

Strapping

A thief may use lengths of strapping—usually of stiff, hardened leather—to improve his chances of moving silently if these would otherwise be reduced by such factors as squeaky floorboards (but not otherwise). These straps will usually be 30 to 36 inches or so in length, and they help distribute the thief's weight over a wider area. Their use negates any negative modifier arising from squeaky floorboards, but the thief has to pick up the strips and move them before him as he walks along. This reduces his movement rate to only one-half of that which normally applies for attempting to move silently—i.e., one-sixth of normal walking move rate!

Hiding in Shadows

As the *Player's Handbook* explains, this ability is not literally just the knack of hiding in areas of shadow while not moving. It also covers hiding in bushes, shrubs, behind drapes, in alcoves—anywhere where there is a chance of skulking about immobile in some location which offers cover and the hope of staying unseen. Considering appropriate equipment needs to be considered in this light.

Camouflage Clothing

There may be exceptional variants on this—for example, if a thief knows that he needs to hide in shadows amongst the crimson curtains of a lady's boudoir he might use a crimson set of clothing. Apart from such singular special cases, there are two general types of camouflage clothing the thief will find useful in various situations.

Darksuit: This comprises black or very deep blue clothes, usually fairly voluminous robes or what might be termed a “utility suit.” Such clothing will usually be lightweight so it can be carried about easily, and worn under normal clothing if needs be. It will always include significant facial covering. If such a suit is worn, it will add +5% to a hide in shadows chance in any area which is shadowy, has a light level equal to dusk or early dawn, or equivalent.

Woodland Suit: This has a similar basic design to a darksuit but is made of light clothing dyed in irregular patterns of greens and browns. It adds +5% to the hide in shadows chance when the thief

attempts to conceal himself in any suitable outdoors setting such as woodland, a field, or the garden of a town house.

Charcoal

Even wearing a darksuit, the glint of moonlight on a pallid white face can give a thief away. Blacking up the face (and neck) with charcoal adds a further 2% to the hide in shadows chance for concealment in shadows, dim light, etc. Burnt cork and soot are alternatives. The thief should not forget to blacken the backs of his hands either!

Plant Dyes

Analogous to the use of charcoal in dim lighting, a thief can use plant dyes (crushed leaves, berries, certain oily barks, etc.) to disguise his exposed face and hands and add a further +2% to his hide in shadows chance in suitable outdoor settings. Such plant materials are usually rather sticky and smelly, however!

Weaponblack

One common problem for the thief attempting to hide in shadows is the glint of a steel weapon in moonlight, torchlight, and the like. The way to avoid this is to use weaponblack, a thick, oil-based emulsion. Weaponblack can be coated on to any metal surface and renders it almost completely matte black and reflection-free. If the DM wishes, use of weaponblack can give the thief a +5% bonus to hide in shadows. A superior rule, though, is that use of this substance saves the thief having to make a second hide in shadows roll if he draws a weapon while hiding, or saves him from any penalty modifier if he has a weapon already drawn when he attempts to hide in shadows initially.

Once the weapon has actually struck a blow, the weaponblack will be wiped off. Because it is oil-based, it is also highly flammable. If ignited it will burn brightly, turning the weapon into the equivalent of a *flametongue* (although it does not count as a magical weapon) for 1d4+1 rounds. If the thief is not protected from fire (e.g., with a *ring of fire resistance*) he suffers 1d4 points of damage per round while holding the weapon.

Detecting Noise

Listening Cones

The simplest versions of this item are cones of bronze or brass or some similar material, with the wide end placed against the surface through which the thief wishes to hear and the narrow end placed against his ear. Such listening cones add +5 to the chances for detecting noise. A generous DM may allow a thief to improvise such an item from the humble wine glass. As noted, with such a hollow cone it is wise to use mesh over the broad end to exclude ear seekers!

If such an item is used for a combination lock (listening for tumblers falling to assist the open locks roll), the thief may well need a special miniaturized cone to assist him. The proto-stethoscope may be born here . . .

Climbing Walls

Clawed Gloves and Shoes

Clawed gloves will be familiar to Oriental Adventures players as tiger's claws, but the DM may allow their availability in any fantasy campaign. Clawed overshoes, similar in design to clawed gloves, also existed and may be permitted (although they are a lot less common). The overshoes are slipped over the thief's normal footwear. The thief uses these clawed items for extra grip on small nooks and crannies of whatever surface he is climbing, so the bonus to the climb walls roll depends on the type of surface being climbed.

On very smooth surfaces where almost no nooks and crannies exist, clawed gloves and boots will not add anything to the climb walls chance for a thief. For smooth/cracked surfaces, clawed gloves add +5% to the climb walls chance, boots add +5% also, the two together add +10%. For any other type of surface, clawed gloves add +10%, clawed boots add +10%, and the combination adds +20% to the climb walls roll. Rates of movement are not altered.

The use of clawed gloves reduces silent movement rolls by -5%, the use of clawed boots by -10%, and the combination by -15%, if the thief is attempting to move silently during his climb (e.g., trying to evade detection by guards atop a parapet).

Clawed gloves can be used as a melee weapon—no weapon proficiency is required for their use. A successful hit inflicts 1 additional point of damage to that normally delivered by a fist blow. Clawed overshoes may similarly be used as a weapon, adding damage to a kick attack, if the DM allows such attack options in melee.

Climbing Daggers

Daggers have been used to aid climbing by thieves for generations, so it is to be expected that a more specialized form has been developed for this task. Climbing daggers have relatively short blades (some 6 to 8 inches long) which are stiff, strong, flat, and very sharp. This allows the dagger to be inserted into wood or between bricks with greater ease than an ordinary dagger. They can be used in all surfaces other than very smooth ones. The handle is also flat and quite broad, and usually bound with leather strips or thick string to give the hands a good grip, or even to allow feet easy purchase when the dagger is used as a step. Also, in place of a normal pommel is a broad, smooth iron ring. This allows a rope to pass through, or it can be attached to one of the straps of a housebreaker's harness (see *Miscellaneous Equipment*, below).

Climbing daggers may add +10% to wall climbing chances at the DM's option, although their main use is with a housebreaker's harness. They may be used in combat, but because of their very different design from that of a normal dagger a separate weapon proficiency is required for their use and damage caused is but 1d3/1d2.

Grapples

Grappling irons are relatively heavy iron tools, usually with three or four separate hooks branching from the end. The tool is attached to a length of rope for climbing. The hook is designed to be thrown and to catch on protrusions and thus support the rope and climber(s). The thief may throw the grappling iron vertically up to one-third his Strength score, rounded up and multiplied by 10 (in feet). Throwing a grapple takes one round; reeling in the rope and retrieving the iron for another attempt after a failure takes 1d4 rounds. The chance for success when throwing a grappling iron (a d100 roll is used) is shown in Table 29 below:

Table 29: GRAPPLING SUCCESS
Catch

Grapple Target	Miss	and Slip	Catch
Stone Parapet	01-72	73-78	79-00
Stone Wall Top	01-83	84-89	90-00
Tree Branches	01-66	67-70	71-00
Rocky Ledge	01-88	89-93	94-00
Wooden Wall	01-70	71-74	75-00

The DM can adjudicate more uncommon instances from this table. A “catch and slip” result means that the grapple seems to have caught solidly, but will slip free after 1d6 rounds of supporting any load. If the thief pulls on a grapple for that many rounds he can dislodge the grapple, whereas a “catch” result means the grapple is securely fastened. If possible, thieves should test the grapple by pulling on it for six rounds before climbing!

Climbing a wall using a grappling hook and rope adds +40% to the normal climb walls chance.

Noise: Grapples make a moderately loud sound when they land. In conditions of near silence, a successful grapple landing can be heard as much as 400 yards away (depending on the size of the grapple, etc.); an unsuccessful throw (with the clang as the grapple lands on the ground) up to 800 yards away. Obviously, these are ideal instances and in most cases the effective range will be considerably lower. Whatever range is deemed appropriate by the DM, a padded grapple—one with sacking or some similarly heavy but coarse cloth covering almost all of the surface of the iron—will reduce it by half.

Surprise!: While this chapter is not concerned with counter-measures, one instance is irresistible: the cruel DM should be advised that shards of glass set into walls will sever the rope of a grappling line in 2d6 rounds. Broken glass is best set into the tops of walls, of course. A really brutal DM may allow a thief near the top of the wall a Dexterity check to avoid falling as the rope severs, success meaning that his hands are now impaled on savagely sharp wedges of glass which are coated in dust and filth, probably giving him blood poisoning if he lives long enough to worry about it.

Special Function Arrows

Throwing grapples is by no means the most efficient way of attaching a rope to a wall, battlement or similar structure. Greater range is ensured by the use of arrows, and many special arrowheads have been developed to help the thief’s chances with such operations.

Two distinct methods are used with special function arrows. The first is known as the one-rope method. The rope is simply affixed to the arrow, and when the arrow has found its mark the thief merely climbs directly up the rope. This method is simple, but the rope attached must be strong enough to bear the thief’s weight, and this considerably reduces the effective range of the bow (and incurs penalties of -2 to hit and damage rolls if the arrow is used in combat for any reason). It also means that the bow shot, being less accurate and powerful, is less likely to provide a good purchase on the target.

The second method is the two-rope method. Here, a light string is threaded through a loop attached to the arrow, and both ends of the string are kept by the thief. The string is light enough not to affect the flight of the arrow. When the arrow has struck the target, a stout rope is attached to one end of the string and the string pulled through to play out the rope, thread it through the loop, and extend it fully in place of the string. This method is obviously more time consuming than the one-rope method; it takes one round to play out 20 feet of rope in this manner. Twice the length of rope is needed, of course, since the rope goes from the thief to the target and back. this method is more

likely to obtain a firm fixing of the arrow into the target.

Either of these two methods can be used with any of the special function arrows below, with the single exception stated. Table 30 gives rules for their usage.

Wood Biter: This has a broad, flat head with backward-facing barbs. It is specifically designed to give a good grip when shot into wooden surfaces.

Stone Biter: The stone biter has a narrow, heavy head of metal, with small ridges rather than barbs. Careful craftsmanship is needed to produce these arrows, with high-quality metal being used and the arrow sharpened to the greatest possible extent. It is designed to give a grip when shot into stone, but will only work on relatively soft stone such as sandstone or brick.

Stone Biter (Adamantine): This is as the above arrow, save that adamantine is used in its manufacture. This makes the arrow capable of biting into all but the hardest stone surfaces, but also makes it **extremely expensive**.

Minor Grapple: This has a small, three-pointed grappling hook as its head, perhaps some 3 inches in total width. This is usually shot through a window, over a palisade, etc., in much the same way as a conventional grappling iron is thrown.

Major Grapple: The major grapple is a far more complex piece of apparatus than the minor grapple, and because of its method of use it can only be employed with the one-rope method (see above). The head of this arrow at first appears to be a fairly long arrowhead of normal width. Its true function is shown only when fired. The rope must be securely fixed at one end by the thief, and as the major grapple arrow closes in on its target and reaches as far as the rope will allow, the sudden tension pulls at the head of the arrow, which opens out into a large three-pointed grappling hook. This is some 6 to 8 inches in width, fully the equal of most ordinary grappling irons. The major grapple has better aerodynamics than the minor grapple and a better chance of gripping, but a considerably reduced range.

Table 30 shows modifiers to dice rolls on Table 29 made when using a special function arrow.

Table 30:
SPECIAL FUNCTION ARROWS

Arrow Type	Special Effects
Wood Biter	+15 for Tree Branches and Wooden Walls
Stone Biter	+10 for Stone Parapet and Stone Wall Top, +5 to Wooden Wall
Stone Biter	+20 for Stone Parapet (Adamantine) and Stone Wall Top, +5 to Wooden Wall
Minor Grapple	+10 to Stone Parapet, Tree Branches; +5 to all others
Major Grapple	+15 to Stone Parapet, Tree Branches; +10 to Rocky Ledge, Wooden Wall; +5 to Stone Wall Top

Other Rules

One-rope method: halve all bow ranges, -5 to all modifiers above save for major grapple.

Spikes and Line

To be effective, climbing spikes need to be used together with a line. Hammering in a spike takes 1d4 rounds with a small hammer; spikes cannot usually be hammered into very smooth surfaces (or they will not take, etc.), with the exception of an ice wall (where spikes offer the only hope of climbing safely). Hammering spikes into surfaces can usually be heard a long way away—even up to a mile in silent, windless, outdoor conditions.

Usually spikes are used as an insurance policy against falls—if a character hammers in a spike, ropes himself to it, climbs 20 feet above this with the rope tied to his waist, and falls he will only fall 40 feet (20 feet down to the spike and a further 20 feet taking up the slack of the rope). A spike used to arrest a fall in this way has a chance of coming loose, though! This chance is 10% per character supported on the climbing line (15% per character for ice wall ascension).

Miscellaneous Equipment

Many more equipment items are detailed here, which may be used by thieves going about their business. Virtually none of these are restricted to usage by thieves only. As before, thieves are the most likely characters to use them or to know where to find those that are not legally available. The DM can determine which items may be available in his campaign, how PC thieves may become aware of them and the like, as with the previously described items.

The miscellaneous items have been grouped into various categories depending on their main application. This is sometimes just for convenience, and some items have several potential uses, so the list is worth perusing carefully. There is a final catchall miscellany, preceded by a section devoted to the several uses thieves can find for modified poles and staves!

Burglary and Theft

Crowbar

This is a simple all-purpose tool which can be used for forcing windows open, levering open chests with locks which refuse to be picked, and for similar purposes. At the DM's option, use of a crowbar adds +10 to any bend bars roll the thief has to make when trying to force open some portal. A crowbar is usually a metal rod 3 to 4 feet in length, with one end slightly crooked and often with a snake-tongue division in it. The DM may allow a thief to use a crowbar as a weapon, although a weapon proficiency slot would have to be used to avoid a non-proficiency penalty in its usage. Damage is d6+1 versus S/M creatures, d6 versus large opponents if the thief has proficiency. Otherwise, it inflicts damage as a club.

Glass Cutter

This very simple instrument is usually a small diamond set into a suitable handle, or even one set into a ring. The diamond must be cut to a fine point, and if used in a ring a hinged top should be used to protect the gem. Such a tool will cut through glass fairly quickly. Attempting an entry through a window is always superior in principle to attempting to force a door, since windows cannot be as physically tough as doors and are less likely to be locked; but if they are locked, a glass cutter is highly useful.

The efficiency of this item is considerably increased if used together with Tar Paper (see below).

Housebreaker's Harness

This is a vital piece of equipment for the serious cat-burglar or housebreaker. Known in thieves' cant as a "spider," it is made of linked leather straps, one around each thigh, one running around the waist, and one over each shoulder. The straps link together to form a tight harness, which can be worn over clothing or leather armor. Attached to the harness are up to eight or so more straps, of varying lengths up to 2 feet. At the ends of these straps are small metal rings, upon which many different devices can be affixed; tools can be hung, climbing daggers fixed, and suchlike. The principal uses of the harness are as follows:

(i) If the thief is climbing a wall using a rope, the rope can be run through one or more of the rings of the harness removing any chance of falling from letting go of the rope.

(ii) Once the thief has reached the point where he hopes to effect a break-in, two of the straps can be fixed to either side of him (usually with climbing daggers, or perhaps with wedges in a window frame, etc). This provides the thief with a firm base and allows him the free use of his hands to open a lock, cut glass, check for traps, and for similar actions.

Imaginative thieves will be able to think up many other uses for this handy and versatile piece of equipment.

Keymaking Set

This expensive item allows a thief to make duplicates of keys he holds in his possession or from impressions of keys made using a wax pad (available as a separate item; see below). The keymaking set is a number of molds, files, small blades, metal-working instruments and the like. It also uses a small oil-burning apparatus for softening and molding metal, so its use is usually restricted to a safe, secure lair where the thief will not be disturbed. Duplicating a key takes 1d4 hours, depending on the size and intricacy of the original. A skeleton key (see below) cannot be duplicated with a keymaking set.

The keymaking set permits the manufacture of poor-to fair-quality soft-metal replicas of keys, which are rough in appearance and do not resemble the work of a professional. the duplicate key will open the same locks as the original if the thief makes a successful Dexterity test (the DM should roll this in secret). If the thief made his duplicate from a wax pad impression, there is a penalty of +2 to this dice roll. The thief always thinks his duplicate is a successful piece of workmanship, of course. Only when it is actually tried on the appropriate lock(s) will the thief find out for sure.

The keymaking set does not preempt the role of locksmiths or their skill. Professional locksmiths will duplicate keys with a 99% chance of success and have superior tools to the keymaking set described here. Each locksmith's set of tools are individually crafted and modified to suit the locksmith and are too complex for thieves who are not themselves locksmiths to employ.

Limewood Strips

These are strips of wood, usually around 4 to 6 inches long and an inch or so high, and very thin. They are also very tough, however, being made of very resilient wood (like limewood, although other, similar woods can be used) and often coated on one or both sides with a very thin coat of toughening varnish. Limewood strips are slipped between a door and its door frame so that the thief can raise a latch on the other side of the door and open it normally (possibly after picking a lock). A

normal latch can be opened, but a bar is too strong for a limewood strip to lift.

Sharkskin

Sharkskin is made from thick cloth, into which are sewn hundreds of tiny curved and barbed hooks, rather like miniature fishing hooks. These hooks are very sharply curved, and are all sewn with the hooks lying in the same direction. Thus, when stroked in one direction the cloth feels perfectly smooth, but in the other it grips tightly and even tears skin or cloth. Sharkskin is so called, fairly obviously, because it resembles the skin of a shark, which is coated in hooked scales.

Sharkskin can be used as a form of hanging board; a square of the material affixed to a surface with hooks pointing downward can be used to keep tools and such in place. Items can simply be pressed down on the surface of the sharkskin, and they will effectively stick to it. This is most useful for a thief climbing a wall and has utility in other circumstances. Sharkskin-coated gloves can be used to assist in climbing walls, in which case they can be treated as clawed gloves (see above) in all respects.

Skeleton Key

These were not considered earlier under the pick locks skill because the DM will almost certainly wish to restrict the availability of these items drastically, if they are allowed in the campaign world at all.

A skeleton key is one which is capable of opening many locks of several different types, in its most versatile form. The very best designs will open virtually any lock, but it is certain that the DM will not want any PC thief acquiring such an item! Rather, four ways of dealing with skeleton keys are suggested here.

First, any individual skeleton key may open locks of up to a certain complexity level. Skeleton keys may be of good, excellent, or superior quality (wretched and poor don't warrant them), and a skeleton key of any particular level of quality can open all locks with a quality the same as, or lower than, that of the skeleton key itself.

Second, a skeleton key can be treated as being equivalent to a thief of a certain level; this can be determined by the DM to suit the level of play in the campaign world. If a purely random determination is required, level 7-14 (6+d8) may be used. The open locks chance can be taken as 20%, plus 5% per thief level.

Third, a skeleton key can be treated as a "master key"—that is, it can open all the locks in some particular area (such as all the non-residential rooms in the east wing of the vampire's castle). In this instance it is really only a glorified substitute for a bunch of keys, although it saves time having just one key to use. A more interesting variant on this theme is to have a skeleton key which can open all the locks commissioned from a particular locksmith (in the last few years, perhaps). If the locksmith was well thought of and often hired, there could be adventures built around just finding out which locations he had built the locks for, let alone going around opening them all!

Fourth, a skeleton key can be rated as a minor magical item, and removed from the realm of mundane equipment, if the DM wishes to restrict the availability of such a key without banishing it from game play. In this case, rating the key as equal in skill to a high-level thief and/or adding major bonuses to pick locks skill for locks up to masterful quality is the best way to use the key.

Finally, note that a skeleton key may open a particular lock, but it does not disarm any trap(s) attached to the lock or portal unless the original key would do so.

Tar Paper

This is simply any kind of heavy paper or (more usually) cloth which has been soaked in tar, honey, treacle, or anything suitably sticky. The thief usually uses it by slapping it on a window before breaking the glass in a window-pane. The sticky surface keeps all the fragments together as the glass breaks. Noise is considerably reduced, both from cushioning the impact of a hammer on glass and by preventing broken glass from scattering all over the floor beyond the window. If there is someone within fairly close listening distance, the DM may make a secret move silently roll for the thief when using this stratagem.

Tar paper can also be used with a glass cutter (see above), being affixed to the center of the area of glass to be cut out, so that it can be simply pulled out when the cutter has done its work.

Wax Pad

This is a small block of wax usually kept in a rigid container to keep it in one piece—the equivalent of a large snuff-box will do nicely. The thief uses the wax to record an impression of a key he wants to have duplicated later. Obviously, the thief can only do this if he has access to a key, at least for a short time, and if he doesn't wish to take a chance on borrowing the key for a while. From the wax impression, the thief can have a locksmith make a duplicate of the original key, or attempt to make one himself using a keymaking set, if he has one.

With very soft wax, which may need heat-softening on the spot, the thief may even be able to make a wax impression of such items as heavy seals, which may be capable of being duplicated later—but an expert will be needed for this kind of duplication/forgery!

Evasions

Thieves often have reason to evade detection or pursuit. Some of their skills (hiding in shadows, moving silently) are tailored toward this end. Equipment detailed here includes further aids to evasion, items to assist in avoiding detection, and even an item or two to enable the thief to whistle innocently if he is found and apprehended at the scene of the crime.

Aniseed

Aniseed is a simple plant-derived natural flavoring. A small quantity of aniseed extract can be used by a thief to ruin any effort to have dogs track his scent, if bloodhounds (or similar) are used by pursuers. Dropping a vial of aniseed down at a suitable place (e.g., by the bank of a stream the thief crosses, by the base of a wall he traverses, even at a crossroads) will ensure that the dogs' sense of smell is utterly ruined for 1d4+1 hours if they reach the spot where the aniseed has been dropped. A saving throw vs. poison will enable a trained dog to evade the aniseed to some extent, but the sense of smell is still lost for 1d4+1 turns. A spell such as *neutralize poison* or *slow poison* cast on an affected dog will eliminate the effect but the dog will still have to pick up the trail further along, somehow, to continue tracking. The effect of aniseed on any other kind of trained tracking animal is up to the DM, but aniseed should have a detrimental effect on almost anything's sense of smell.

Caltrops

These actually come in different shapes and sizes, but the basic form is that of a metal ball with

four to six spikes or prongs set into it. When a caltrop is thrown to the ground it always lands with one spike standing more or less upright. A thief may throw small caltrops to the ground to slow down pursuers. Caltrops cannot be used as missile weapons, however.

The effect of caltrops depends on how many are thrown down by the thief. The base number is 10 thrown down in an area of 25 square feet. Anyone entering the area must make a saving throw vs. paralyzation. A successful save means that the character has stepped on one, suffering 1d4 points of damage, and must halt movement. If half the number of caltrops is used (only five in a 25-foot area), the save is made at +4; for every extra five dropped in such an area, the save is made at an additional -2 (up to -6 in total). A character moving at less than one-third his normal movement rate doesn't need to make a save. A fresh saving throw must be made for each 5-foot section entered in which caltrops have been dropped.

If a pursuer steps on a caltrop, it must be removed before the pursuer can continue. This takes one round. Also, the pursuer must make a second save vs. paralyzation to see if he is temporarily lamed. If the save is made, pursuit can continue normally. If the save is failed, the pursuer can only move at one-third normal rate for 24 hours (or until the damage is magically healed).

An ingenious thief can even improvise caltrops—in one infamous instance, from a sack of potatoes found in the kitchen of a house being burgled and a small bag of nails carried by the thief in question. Modifiers to the saving throws of potential victims can be allowed for such improvised versions!

Note: For players and DMs with *Unearthed Arcana*, the rules above are based on the entry for tetsu-bishi in *Oriental Adventures*, which has somewhat superior rules to those in the *Unearthed Arcana* entry for caltrops.

Catstink

Even the best-trained dog (watchdog or tracking dog) finds it impossible to avoid being distracted when there are cats about. This is exploited by the few alchemists who have the recipe for the manufacture of catstink. These few are well-paid by thieves' guilds for their work, blending various liquids obtained from diverse parts of cats with a few secret ingredients to produce a thick, foul-smelling, brown-yellow liquid, catstink.

Catstink is specifically blended to drive any dog to distraction, allowing the thief to get past watchdogs as they frantically try to locate the cat which they can smell so pungently. Dogs who can smell catstink will not do anything other than try to get at the source of the smell, no matter how highly trained. Spells (*slow*, *neutralize poison*) are only useful if the dog is wholly removed from the smell. Even then the effect of the spell will not be evident until one turn has elapsed and the dog returns to normal.

Catstink can also be used to delay dogs tracking a thief as he attempts to make an escape, in much the same way as aniseed is used, albeit much more effectively (and much more expensively). The smell of catstink can be picked up by dogs up to 200 yards away, or even as far as half a mile if they are downwind of it.

Dog Pepper

This may be dropped on the floor, like aniseed, to put dogs off the scent when pursuing a thief. It is less effective than aniseed, however, the pursuing dog being allowed a saving throw vs. poison to avoid the effect of the dog pepper absolutely. If the save is failed, though, the dog is unable to continue pursuit for 1d4+1 turns.

Dog pepper may more usefully be scattered into the air, a small packet holding enough to fill a 10-foot cube. The pepper will hang in the air for 1d4 rounds after being flung into it. A dog entering the area during this time gets no saving throw to avoid the effect of the pepper. If dog pepper is thrown right into a dog's face, the unfortunate animal gets no saving throw and becomes hysterical for an hour, during which time it is totally uncontrollable.

Hand Lamp

This is usually a small metal pot about the size of a night-light candle. It has a hinged flip-up lid with a mirror on the inside; a silver mirror is often used, so the item is not cheap. The mirror directs the light, and the lid also works as a snuffer when closed. The lamp provides enough light for the thief to work by (e.g., when trying to pick a lock in a dark place), while not shedding enough to give the thief away (hopefully). Certainly, the dim, focused light is unlikely to be visible at all further than some 20 feet from the thief, and even within this range it is very, very dim.

Hollow Boots

These come in various forms, but a common design is one with swivelling heels. The heel of the boot is grasped and twisted firmly toward the inside surface. The heel swivels and reveals a small, hollow compartment within the boot. These compartments are very small, and will typically only hold one gem of moderate size or up to four small ones. The design of the boot is such that there is not an externally visible built-up heel, but nonetheless a thief wearing these boots suffers a -5 penalty to any move silently rolls he has to make.

Marbles

The use of these is an old chestnut, but perennially popular with thieves, not least because of their effectiveness. A small bag of marbles (a general term for small spheres of glass, metal, etc.) unleashed over a stone floor to roll around forces any pursuers to slow to half normal movement rate or be forced to make a Dexterity test. If this test is failed the pursuer slips up and has to spend a full round getting up again. Because marbles roll around a lot, a small bag (30 or so) will cover a 10' x 30' (or equivalent) area. Small stones and pebbles can only be substituted for marbles if they have been polished, filed, etc., so that they are almost perfectly round—a time-consuming business.

Self-Protection and Combat

The equipment detailed here offers sneaky combat options for thieves, which any character with any real decency and sense of honor would usually eschew. Since by definition some of these items subvert normal combat options, the DM should feel free to modify and/or restrict the availability of items he feels unsuited to his campaign. the concealed weapons listed, at the least, should definitely be made available to thieves who are members of Assassins' Guilds.

Blinding Powder

This is a general term for any powder which is highly abrasive, irritating to the eyes, and disabling to the victim as a result. Powdered stone, pepper, dust soaked in onion juice, and strong ammonium salts—blinding powder can be made from many ingredients.

Blinding powder is only useful if it is thrown right into the eyes of a victim. This counts as a called shot (*Dungeon Master's Guide*, p.58) with an additional (doubled) penalty, for a total of -8 on the attack roll. the Dexterity bonus of the person throwing the powder applies to the attack roll. Further, the base AC of the target ignores any armor or shield used, save for the use of a helmet or helm; magical protection such as *bracers of defense* or a *ring of protection* protect the target, as does Dexterity (unless the attack has an element of surprise).

If blinding powder strikes a victim the effects are the same as those of the *stinking cloud* spell save that they last for 2d4+2 rounds and no saving throw is allowed. If the victim can wash his eyes with plenty of water, the effect will only last for one round after the eyes are washed. Although blinding powder can contain some unpleasant ingredients, it has no permanently damaging effects on the eyes.

Death Knife

This sinister instrument can appear to be a bladeless knife, but it is more often disguised as something more innocent such as a case for a comb or spectacles or quill pen, a tool of some sort, etc. The disguise will not fool any close inspection, however. The blade of the knife is within a barrel inside the handle and is spring-loaded. The knife is triggered by pressing a catch on the handle; the blade shoots forward with considerable force. The weapon does the same damage as a normal dagger, although one point of damage is added for a first strike when the blade is triggered.

The obvious advantage of the death knife is its capacity for surprise. Since it doesn't look like a weapon until the blade is sprung, a victim can be taken totally off guard by its use. If the target does not realize a blow is coming and the thief manages to get the weapon close to the body of the victim so that a lunge can be made with it, any strike is treated as a backstab, with standard hit and damage bonuses, given the surprise element. A backstab is not always literally a stab in the back!

An envenomed death knife in the hands of a skilled assassin is an extremely dangerous weapon, and the DM may wish to rule that since the blade has to be concealed for some time before a strike there is a 25% (or higher) chance that the poison will have dripped from the blade before the assassin strikes with it.

Folding Bow

Bows are very useful for thieves, but are very hard to conceal because of their size and shape. A folding bow solves this problem, dividing neatly in half when unstrung, making it a much more suitable size and allowing concealment—for example, in a thigh sheath. Only short bows have folding-bow equivalents.

The joint in the middle of the bow weakens it, however, reducing the effective ranges to S 4, M 8, L 13, and also making it -1 on damage rolls (but any hit causes at least one point of damage).

Pin Ring

This simple weapon is a ring with a flip-up lid, below which is a needle capable of delivering a dose of poison (or knock-out drug, etc.) to the target. The most primitive version of this will have the pin simply sitting in a small reservoir of liquid drug or toxin. Since administration of the poison/drug is rather haphazard here, the victim receives a bonus of +2 to any saving throw against its effects. Subtler and more refined designs have a needle capable of drawing up liquid from a reservoir, so that only a normal saving throw (or even one with a -2 penalty) applies. The DM should decide which to

allow in the campaign (both can exist at the same time, of course).

An attack with a pin ring is a called shot (with a -4 penalty to the attack roll) because it must strike exposed flesh—the pin will not administer poison through any significant thickness of clothing. A strike to the neck is the time-honored way of making sure the toxin gets into the bloodstream quickly. The DM may rule in unusual cases that no called shot is needed (e.g., the thief surprises a victim in his bath) or that the pin ring cannot be effective at all (e.g., the victim is clad from head to toe in field plate).

Sword Stick

This is simply a long, slender, rapier-like blade concealed within what appears to be a simple walking stick or cane. The long and thin blade requires a weapon proficiency slot to be used most effectively. Swashbucklers are particularly fond of this weapon. Damage done by the blade is as per a short sword. It takes one round to draw the blade from the sword stick and ready it for use. The main use of the weapon, obviously, is the possibility of smuggling it into places where weapons are not permitted.

It is highly doubtful whether anything like a sword stick existed in medieval times, but this weapon definitely adds some style and dash to a campaign. Since it does less damage than most swords (and requires a weapon proficiency) the DM should consider allowing it in his game.

Wrist Sheath

This small leather sheath is made to hold a knife or dagger, and is strapped to the forearm (below the sleeve of a garment) so that the weapon can be flipped to the hand by an arm movement and the blade readied for action. A dexterous thief can work a blade into his hand by arm movements disguised in the context of changing posture while sitting in a chair, or similar, seemingly innocuous moves. Again, the obvious advantage is that of concealment.

Variants on this theme are drop sheaths, which are usually sewn into leather jackets or similar articles of clothing. Here, release of the dagger from the sheath can be triggered by mechanical means (pressing a jacket sleeve stud, etc.) or by muscular stimuli triggering pressure pads (tensing the biceps firmly against the fist of the other arm, etc.).

The Joy of Sticks

This section details several uses for poles, staves, or stout sticks, many of which can obviously be improvised as and when necessary. PC thieves might, however, prefer suitably modified poles ready to hand in case of urgent need!

Blade Pole

This is a substitute for a polearm, but is not used as a combat weapon. Rather, a small blade is wedged into one end of a pole, and this is used for cutting objects at a distance. The most notable use for the blade pole is in cutting trip wires (e.g., at a distance if the thief is unsure whether traps may be triggered).

Climbing Pole

This has to be a stout, strong pole, 10 feet long or so, to be of any real use. It has notches cut into it at regular intervals (approximately every 2 feet) to enable the thief to climb using it. It must be set at a suitable angle against the wall, or else it cannot be employed. Thieves will not often have use for such an item, but it has its uses for dealing with very slippery or smooth surfaces, walls made with broken glass shards in the mortar, and similar unusual cases.

Hooked Pole

A strong hook is set into the end of the pole, which has several uses. The first is to yank discovered trip wires, if this is what the thief wishes to do, although a blade pole is usually superior for dealing with such problems. The more common use, though, is to use the hook to catch on objects so they can be retrieved. Depending on the size of the hook, anything from a key ring or small jewelry casket (hooked through the catch) to a rich man's joint of beef can be purloined by the thief. At the DM's option, a skill check (a pick pockets roll) may be required for success. In medieval England, fishing through windows with hooked poles was so common that a subclass of thief who made a living in this way was commonly known and called "the hooker."

Mirror Pole

This uses mirrors at both ends of the pole, set at a suitable angle so that the thief can peer, periscope-like, around corners using the instrument.

Miscellany

Blade Boots

This exotic title is a catchall for specially modified boots which have concealed blades within them. The blades have to be small, of course; they are usually little bigger than modern-day razor blades. They are usually concealed in secret compartments in the heels of boots (see Hollow Boots above), but slender blades can even be hidden in the soles of boots. Such blades are of little use as weapons, but can be used to slit pouches and purses, to cut ropes, and for similar tasks.

False Scabbard

Thieves can employ stout scabbards which are slightly longer than the swords which fit into them, leaving a length of scabbard at the end which is a separate, hollow compartment. Usually, this can be accessed via a sliding panel at the end of the scabbard.

This hollow compartment can be used to conceal a great many kinds of things, either to smuggle them in (poisons, dog pepper, blinding powder, etc.) or smuggle them out (gems and such). Some are so well-designed that the compartment can be entered from above or below, so that the thief can use the false scabbard as a snorkel (or, more correctly, as an underwater breathing tube) if he has to stay concealed in the water for any reason.

Hand Warming Lamp

This small lamp is oil-burning, with a reservoir of oil and a small wick sunk into an earthenware shell. It is used by the thief to warm his hands, by cupping them around it, if cold would otherwise impair his talents (try picking a lock with frozen fingers in a cold clime!). Virtually no light is pro-

duced, the aim simply being to warm the hands. The simplest version of this is a corked earthenware sphere which can be filled with hot oil before the thief sets off on his work, to be drawn from a pocket and held in the hands when needed.

Marked Cards and Biased Dice

These are standard trappings for any self-respecting swindler. There are no rules for gambling in AD&D® 2nd Edition, however, so the DM has two options. First, he can write his own. Second, the simple rule-of-thumb rules suggested here can be used.

If the Gaming proficiency is being used, use of suitably marked cards or biased dice allows a -1 modifier to the d20 check (remember that proficiencies work when low dice rolls are made).

If the game is actually being played out and the Gaming proficiency not used, then the thief PC is allowed (in effect) to replace any one card drawn or die thrown if he has the suitable prop and if a Dexterity test is made. Thus, if the PC is playing blackjack and has drawn a king and a five, the effect of using marked cards is simulated by allowing a redraw on one card, if the player wishes to do so (in this case, the five, in all likelihood). When rolling the Dexterity test, if the d20 roll is 18+ the thief has been seen cheating (even if he makes the Dexterity test successfully). For obvious reasons, the DM should roll this test in secret!

Water Shoes

These belong most correctly in Kara-Tur, land of *Oriental Adventures* and ninja, but they could exist in any fantasy setting.

Water shoes are simply large, wickerwork basketlike devices which are worn over the feet (and come to mid-calf height). The thief balances in an upright position and propels himself across the water with a paddle or oar. The DM may insist on a move silently check at some stage. If anything happens to startle the thief (such as an arrow whizzing past his head or some monster rising up in the water), a Dexterity test may be called for to avoid falling over into the water.

Cost and Availability of Equipment

In Table 31 below, the cost, weight, and legality of equipment items are listed. These are listed in the same order they appear in the preceding text. A few don't appear; there are no prices for the poles (which can be rigged up from equipment listed in the *Player's Handbook* anyway), for example. Cost and weight are as per the *Player's Handbook* format and clothing items have weights listed for them but are also denoted by the letter "C." They add nothing to encumbrance if worn normally.

Legality of the items is important. Items are listed as L (legal; freely available on the open market), S (shady; available in more liberal countries and in dodgy back-street shops under the counter), and I (illegal; from a thieves' guild only). Some items get a split classification, e.g., "L/S." This may be because they are borderline, or because they are legal for some narrow, specific occupational usage only (and there may be restrictions on their sale).

Finally, items marked with two asterisks (**) may be hard to obtain even if not illegal, for various reasons. They may need rare craftsmen to make, basic ingredients may be hard to find (e.g., black dragon acid!), and such. The item description should make clear why an availability problem may exist. The DM should determine availability rather than using a random roll.

Table 31:

PURCHASING THIEF EQUIPMENT

Item	Legality	Cost	Weight
Arm Sling	L	3 cp	
Mini-Blade	L	5 cp	*
Razor Ring (iron)	S/I	2 gp	*
Razor Ring (silver)	S/I	10 gp	*
Thieves Pick	I	30 gp	1
Acid, Metaleating, 1 vial**	L	50 gp	
(Lock) Chisels, set of 3	L	2 gp	1
Hacksaw (equivalent)	L	3 gp	1
Hacksaw Blade	L	6 sp	*
Metal File	L	5 sp	
Wire Cutters	L/S	1 gp	
Funnel, small	L	3 cp	
Footpad's Boots	I	8 gp	3 C
Silenced Armor**	S	750 gp+	50
Leather straps (pair)	L	3 sp	1
Darksuit	S	30 gp	5
Woodland Suit	L/S	35 gp	5
Charcoal, bundle	L	2 cp	
Weaponblack (vial)	S	2 gp	
Listening Cone (brass)	L	2 gp	
Clawed Gloves**	I	20 gp	1 C
Clawed Overshoes	I	15 gp	1 C
Climbing Dagger	L	5 gp	1
Grappling Iron	L	3 gp	2
Arrow, wood biter	L	8 sp	*
Arrow, stone biter	L	1 gp	*
Arrow, stone biter, adamantine	L	7 gp	*
Arrow, minor grapple	L/S	6 gp	
Arrow, major grapple	L/S	10 gp	1
Climbing Spikes, iron (10)	L	5 sp	4
Crowbar	L	6 sp	4
Glass-cutter (handled)	L/I	120 gp	1
Housebreaker's Harness**	I	25 gp	2
Keymaking Set	I	60 gp	6
Limewood (as bark strips, 10)	L	3 cp	*
Sharkskin (per sq. ft.)	L/S	12 gp	1
Skeleton Key	I	var.	
Wax, block	L	3 cp	
Aniseed, vial	L	2 sp	*
Caltrops (10)	L/S	3 gp	1
Catstink, vial**	S/I	40 gp	
Dog Pepper, packet	S	1 sp	*

Hand Lamp (with silvered mirror)	L/S	10 gp	1
Hollow Boots	I	15 gp	3 C
Marbles, bag (30)	L	2 cp	
Blinding Powder	var.	var.	*
Death Knife**	S/I	12 gp	1
Folding Bow	L/S	45 gp	2
Pin Ring (iron)	S/I	2 gp	*
Pin Ring (silver)	S/I	10 gp	*
Sword Stick**	L/S	25 gp	4
Wrist Sheath	S	3 sp	
Blade Boots	I	15 gp	3 C
False Scabbard**	L/S	12 gp	1-2
Hand-Warming Lamp	L	2 sp	
Marked Cards, Deck**	I	5 gp	
Biased Dice, bone, box of 4	I	5 gp	
Biased Dice, ivory, box of 4	I	20 gp	
Water Shoes, pair	S/I	5 gp	1

Magical Items for Thieves

When possible, the DM should select the magical items he will give out in his campaign. Sometimes, though, a fast and random selection may be needed. In this case, if the DM rolls 99 or 00 on Table 88 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide* (p. 135), he should not roll for a magical weapon, but make a simple d20 roll on Table 32 below.

The items shown in the later tables fall into three categories:

(i) Items restricted to use by thieves only. These are indicated by (T) following the title of the item in the tables.

(ii) Items which do not have to be restricted to thieves only, but which have more than one effect, with at least some of their effects being of value for thieves alone. That is, thieves will benefit far more from these items than other characters. These are indicated by (T*) following the title of the item in the tables. The DM may well wish to rule that these items can only be used by thieves in his campaign.

(iii) Items which can be used by nonthieves as well as thieves, but which are clearly important for such typical thief activities as spying, stealing, snooping, sneaking and such.

As a general note, most of the items in this section are of relatively low power. This should allow DMs to introduce one or two such items into even a fairly low-magic campaign with no fear of upsetting game balance.

Table 32:
MAGICAL ITEMS FOR THIEVES

d20		
Roll	Category	Table
1-7	Potions and oils	33
8-11	Miscellaneous Magic: Clothing and Jewelry	34
12-15	Miscellaneous Magic: Other Sneaky Stuff	35
16-19	Weapons	36

For each of the later tables 33 through 36, a simple d6 roll is used to determine the nature of the item found. None of these later tables has any subtables to worry about.

Detection Resistance

Many of the items listed below were designed to enable the thief to avoid detection, to prevent his ill-gotten gains from being discovered, and such. Clearly, the avoidance of detection by simple low-level magical spells is highly important to many thieves. As a consequence, some of the thief magical items are enchanted with detection resistance, requiring any spellcaster using a divination spell (such as *detect magic*, *detect invisibility* in appropriate cases, etc.) effectively to overcome 50% magic resistance so far as the detection goes. It also protects the thief against discovery by creatures able to detect invisible (allow a flat 50% chance of automatic nondetection in cases where such creatures have no spellcaster level). This detection resistance does not give the thief any general magic resistance, of course!

“XP Value” entries are experience point awards which apply for making the item. An entry of “U” means that the item is unique and cannot readily be magically made, since the original was made by unknown means.

Table 33: POTIONS AND OILS

d6		XP
Roll	Item	Value
1	<i>Essence of Darkness</i> (T*)	300
2	<i>Oil of Slickness</i> (T)	350
3	<i>Master Thievery</i> (T)	500
4	<i>Perception</i> (T*)	300
5	<i>Sleep Breathing</i>	250
6	<i>Thievery</i> (T)	350

**Table 34:
MISCELLANEOUS MAGIC:
CLOTHING AND JEWELRY**

d6		XP
Roll	Item	Value
1	<i>Amulet of Dramatic Death</i> (T)	U
2	<i>Boots of Balance</i> (T*)	1,000
3	<i>Gloves of Evasion</i> (T*)	1,000
4	<i>Mantle of the Mundane</i> (T*)	1,500
5	<i>Robe of Vanishing</i> (T)	2,000
6	<i>Shadowcloak</i> (T*)	3,000

**Table 35:
MISCELLANEOUS MAGIC:
OTHER SNEAKY STUFF**

d6	XP
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Roll	Item	Value
1	<i>Bag of Vanishing</i> (T)	5,000
2	<i>Boxes of Delightful Transport</i>	2,500
3	<i>Dust of Trail Dispersion</i> (T*)	500
4	<i>Lens of Remote Viewing</i> (T)	1,000
5	<i>Lens of Valuation</i> (T)	1,000
6	<i>Tallin's Tightrope</i>	1,250

Table 36: MAGIC WEAPONS

d6		XP
Roll	Item	Value
1	<i>Crossbow of Angling</i>	750
2	<i>Dagger of Impaling</i> (T)	300
3	<i>Dagger of Resource</i> (T)	500
4	<i>Dagger of Sounding</i> (T)	300
5	<i>Scabbard of Poison</i>	500
6	<i>Shortsword of Backstabbing</i> (T*)	700

Description of Magical Items

Potions and Oils

Essence of Darkness: This pure black oily fluid must be kept in tough, light-proof containers, since it is destroyed after one turn in bright sunlight or one hour exposed to daylight. Essence of darkness is pure, concentrated, liquefied darkness itself. It can be used in a number of ways:

(i) When a dose is swallowed it makes the imbibers' entire body, including hair, teeth, and even the whites of the eyes, pure matte black in color. This can enhance a thief's chance of hiding in shadows as shown below.

(ii) Similarly, if one dose is diluted in a gallon or so of warm water, the essence creates a powerful black dye. A gallon of this diluted form can be used to dye clothes and even armor and weapons; one gallon of the dye is sufficient to treat the clothes and equipment of one character. The dye takes one turn to mix and soak into the items and one turn to dry. This process also affects the chances for successful hiding in shadows.

Body only (wearing normal clothes)	+5%
Body only (wearing no clothes)	+25%
Clothes only	+20%
Both body and clothes	+40%

These bonuses only apply when the thief is trying to hide in darkened areas, obviously; that is, to "traditional" hiding in shadows. Detection resistance operates on a thief using essence of darkness to hide in this way.

(iii) *Essence of darkness* is unstable and if a vial is struck by a crushing blow it will explode into darkness 15' radius. A single dose of the magical essence will create a darkness 5' radius if so struck. This property has been exploited by making small glass or ceramic globes filled with the liquid which are then thrown forcefully onto hard surfaces to create "darkness bombs." At the DM's option, a thief who has ingested the essence or applied it to his clothing might similarly become the center of

a darkness 5' radius effect if struck a severe blow (50% of remaining hit points, with a 12 hit point minimum for the effect to operate) with a blunt weapon.

The effects of *essence of darkness* last for six hours plus 1d6 turns, if used externally; if ingested, it has the same duration as a standard potion. Each bottle or vial of the essence found usually contains sufficient fluid for 1d4+4 doses.

Oil of Slickness: The consistency of this magical substance is variable; sometimes it is found as a small vial of very viscous oil, sometimes as a pot of thin, creamy white salve. It is applied by rubbing into the skin of the hands (taking one round). When rubbed in, it improves the speed and coordination of the hands so that all manually-based thieving skills (pick pockets, open locks, find/remove traps) are improved by 10%. A vial or pot of this oil (or salve) usually contains 1d4+4 applications. The effect lasts for 1d4+4 turns. The bonuses to the ability scores cannot be claimed by any thief who is wearing gauntlets or gloves of any kind, including magical ones!

Potion of Master Thievery: This potion gives the thief a temporary increase in levels if he has fewer than 13 levels of experience. The number of levels gained depend on the thief's level, as shown below.

Level of Imbiber	Levels bestowed	Added hit dice	Increase in each skill
1st-3rd	5	5d6	+20%
4th-6th	4	4d6+1	+16%
7th-9th	3	3d6+2	+12%
10th-12th	2	2d6+3	+8%

The thief acts as if he were at the experience level bestowed by the magic of the potion. Damage sustained is taken first from magically gained temporary extra hit points. So far as thieving skills are concerned, the potion affects these all equally by the increase shown. The effects of this potion last for 5d6 rounds.

Potion of Perception: This enhances the senses of the imbiber to a great degree, with numerous effects:

- (i) A thief gains a 10% bonus to his open locks and remove traps skills.
- (ii) A thief gains a 20% bonus to his find traps and hear noise skills.
- (iii) A character's chance for being surprised is halved (usually this means a +1 or +2 on the die).
- (iv) A character's chance for detecting secret or concealed doors is doubled. This may also be applied to detecting hidden or concealed objects if the DM wishes to use an Intelligence check for this; a bonus of +4 applies to such an ability check. A corresponding bonus of -4 applies to any observation proficiency check.
- (v) A character has a 25% chance of automatically detecting invisible or detecting illusions (from spells or spell-like effects below 5th level) as such.

However, this enhancement also makes the imbiber vulnerable to gaze attacks and weapons and also sound-based attacks (such as a *shout* spell or the roaring of an androsphinx) and all saving throws made against such attacks are at -2. The effects of the potion last for 1d4+4 turns.

Potion of Sleep Breathing: This potion allows the imbiber to breathe a colorless, odorless cloud

of sleep-inducing gas up to three times within an hour after drinking it. This cloud is effectively a 20' x 20' x 20' cube. Within the cloud, creatures are affected as if struck by a *sleep* spell, the effects of which are exactly duplicated by the cloud. If the thief does not breathe out a cloud in this way within an hour after drinking the potion, he must save versus spells or fall into a deep, comatose sleep himself for 1d4+4 turns. This potion is obviously of great value for the thief in dealing with numbers of low-level and peripheral guards when he is trespassing, breaking and entering, etc.

Potion of Thievery: Similar to, but weaker than, the *potion of master thievery*, this potion also grants the thief drinking it temporary increases in levels, hit dice, and skills, if he is of 9th or lower level prior to drinking it, as shown below.

Level of Imbiber	Levels bestowed	Added hit dice	Increase in each skill
1st-3rd	3	3d6	+12%
4th-6th	2	2d6+1	+8%
7th-9th	1	1d6+2	+4%

As with the *potion of master thievery*, the individual acts in all respects as a thief of the higher level gained after drinking the potion, with the increase in thieving skills being equally spread across all categories by the bonus shown. Damage sustained is taken from additional temporary hit points gained first. The effects of the potion last for 1d4+4 turns.

Miscellaneous Magic: Clothing and Jewelry

Amulet of Dramatic Death: Only a few of these prized items exist, each created for a high-level thief in the service of two powerful spellcasters, a mage and an illusionist, who combined their skills to create them. There are six amulets known, which differ in only one respect; all have the following common properties.

The amulet is activated when the wearer suffers one particular attack form (and only that attack form) which would be sufficient to kill or wholly disable the wearer (e.g., by *petrification*). At this point the magic of the amulet is activated. Damage sustained from the killing attack is wholly negated, and a special attack (such as *petrification*) likewise negated. The thief is at once made invisible. Lastly, a powerful programmed illusion is brought into operation so that the amulet-wearer appears to have been slain or disabled by the attack. This programmed illusion is both complete and dramatic—e.g., an amulet protecting against magical fire will show the victim of *fireball* attack as a burned corpse, complete with the smell of roasted flesh. Only direct, tactile checks or a powerful *divination* spell will reveal the illusion for what it is. The amulet will function only once per day. Roll 1d6 on the table below to determine the single attack form which is protected against by the amulet.

d6 Roll	Specific Protection
1	Magical fire (including red dragon breath, etc.)
2	Lightning and Electrical attacks
3	Cold-based attacks
4	Petrification
5	Edged Weapons

Boots of Balance: The wearer of these soft, low-heeled supple leather boots is endowed with a magically enhanced sense of balance. This has the following important effects:

(i) A thief wearing the boots gains a +10% bonus to all move silently rolls and also to all climb walls rolls.

(ii) The Dexterity of any character wearing the boots is increased by one point for all purposes where the hands are not involved. Thus, a thief cannot claim a bonus to skills such as open locks, but a bonus to Armor Class may apply, and likewise a bonus applies to Dexterity checks in certain situations (e.g., to avoid a fall).

(iii) The wearer gains the tightrope walking proficiency; if this is already possessed, a -4 bonus modifier applies to all proficiency check die rolls when wearing the boots.

A wearer of *boots of balance* cannot also claim a further bonus for moving silently from mundane aids (such as the use of leather strapping to cross creaky floorboards). Also, the bonuses gained from *boots of balance* cannot be added to the bonus gained if the wearer also uses *gauntlets of dexterity*.

Gloves of Evasion: These gloves are made of exceptionally supple, thin calfskin, and when put on they blend with the skin and become virtually undetectable (and are detection resistant). A thief wearing them gains a +10% bonus to open locks skill and can undo almost any knot automatically in one round. Any character wearing the gloves gains a proficiency in escapology, being able to manipulate his hands in such a way that he can escape from manacles, chains, irons or similar restraints if a Dexterity check (with a +2 bonus if the character is a thief) is made.

Mantle of the Mundane: This very ordinary, even shabby, brown or grey cloak makes its wearer appear utterly unmemorable. It gives a 5% bonus to hide in shadows in all circumstances and makes the wearer 80% undetectable if in a crowd (detection resistance applies here also). It also makes the wearer almost impossible to recognize after having been seen—very useful in avoiding identification after a crime. Unless a witness (and it must be an eye witness) makes a check against one-fourth of his Intelligence the wearer of the mantle will have appeared so mundane and boring in appearance that the witness will be unable to relate him to the thief (regardless of whether the thief is wearing the mantle the next time the witness sees him).

Robe of Vanishing: This simple and innocent-looking robe is a boon for a thief needing to elude pursuers quickly. The thief only needs to grasp the hems of the robe and clutch it very tightly about him and he will simply seem to vanish, although the thief will just have been affected as per a *rope trick* spell (no rope is visible, of course) and also made invisible. detection resistance applies to the extradimensional space created. The *rope trick* effect will last for up to six turns but the invisibility created is of the normal sort (permanent until some offensive action is undertaken). Wise thieves will make sure that other magical aids to escape (notably a *potion of flying*) are on hand to maximize the value of this robe. The robe can be used up to three times per day to create its magical effects.

Shadowcloak: This large, cowed cloak is made from pure black velvet. When worn by a thief it improves hide in shadows chances by 25% and makes a thief 50% likely to be invisible in near-darkness (even to infravision, ultravision, etc.). It can also be used to cast *darkness*, *darkness 15' radius*, and *continual darkness* once each per day (at 12th level of magic use). Finally, once per day the wearer can actually transform into a shadow (cf. *Monstrous Compendium I*) for up to 12 turns, becoming a shadow in all respects save for mental ones (thus, the wearer cannot be damaged by

nonmagical weapons, undead take the wearer for a shadow and ignore him, etc.). Saves against light-based attacks (e.g., a *light* spell cast into the eyes) are always made at -2 by the wearer of a *shadowcloak*.

If a cleric successfully makes a turning attempt against the wearer in shadowform, the cloak wearer is permitted a saving throw (this is at -4 if the cleric is actually able to damn/destroy shadows). If the save fails, the wearer suffers 1d6 points of damage per level of the cleric and the *shadowcloak* is destroyed. If the save is made, the character takes half damage and must flee in fear from the cleric at maximum rate for one turn.

Miscellaneous Magic: Other Sneaky Stuff

Bag of Vanishing: This appears to be a simple pouch capable of carrying some 2-3 lbs. or so. In fact, it operates as a bag of holding capable of carrying up to 50 lbs. weight while having an encumbrance of only 3 lbs. Further, the *bag of vanishing* can have its drawstrings tugged tightly once per day and it will simply disappear for six turns; the equivalent of a rope trick spell will operate on the bag (although it will stay with its owner) and it will also have detection resistance operating upon it.

This bag is invaluable for smuggling, as should be obvious. The only problem is that each time the rope trick function is used there is a 5% chance that the contents will vanish into the Ethereal Plane and the bag will be empty when it is checked later.

Boxes of Delightful Transports: These wooden boxes are 6-inch cubes, and come in identical pairs (often decorated with great attention to detail). When a nonliving object of suitable size is placed in one and the lid closed and a command word spoken, the object will disappear, only to reappear (effectively teleported) in the matching box. This function operates up to three times per day.

While *boxes of delightful transports* are obviously very useful, they have certain limitations. It is not possible for the object-teleport to cross any planar barriers. And, while the distance between the boxes is not important in affecting the teleport range, there is always a 5% chance that the object dispatched will not reach its destination, instead appearing at some random location 10d10 miles away. Thus, dispatch of valuables is not recommended. The boxes are more often used to send messages, which can always be sent in duplicate (which gives very high chances for at least one successful dispatch).

The major limitation on use of these boxes, though, is that no enchanted object can be teleported using them. Even the placing of a simple *Nystul's Magic Aura* spell on an object will prevent its being teleported using these boxes. Hence, magical items such as rings, potions, amulets and other such things, small enough to fit into one of these boxes, cannot be teleported to a distant location.

Dust of Trail Dispersion: A generous pinch of this magical dust, when scattered over the beginning or origin of a trail (such as at the bottom of a wall surrounding a house the thief has burgled, at the point he reaches the ground) will prevent its being followed by all normal sensory means (rangers, bloodhounds, etc.). The dust is usually found in a small box, or packets, with one "find" usually being sufficient for 1d4+4 uses.

Lens of Remote Viewing: These small, clear gems (the term "lens" is a slight misnomer here) appear to be worthless quartz, but in fact possess a powerful dweomer. If the owner attunes himself to a *lens of remote viewing* (a process which takes four hours of meditation), he can then "see" through the lens whatever scene is happening in front of the lens and within its field of vision,

wherever the lens may later be. There is no range limit, save that no perception across the planes is possible. No auditory information is detected through the lens, and no spells can be cast through it. A *lens of remote viewing* is also detection resistant. At any one time, any thief may be attuned with a number of such lenses not exceeding one-half his Intelligence score (round fractions down). These items are usually found singly, and are of obvious value in spying.

Lens of Valuation: This highly-prized item consists of a lens some 3 inches in diameter with a handle some 6 inches long. The lens allows the viewer to estimate the true worth of any nonmagical object to within 5%, on studying it for five rounds or longer. Of course, this will be an average price, and special conditions of supply or demand may make this valuation wildly inaccurate.

Merchants usually go to considerable lengths to prevent any *lens of valuation* from being used on their goods! In the thieving community, it is most sought-after by fences, who can widen their operations in a major way if they possess this item.

Tallin's Tightrope: This modified *rope of climbing* will only snake forward at an angle of up to 45 degrees upward or downward, but it also enables its owner and up to five man-sized or smaller creatures touched by its owner to walk upon it as if they had the tightrope walking proficiency, with a +4 bonus to any proficiency checks required. Anyone not touched by the rope owner attempting to walk on it will suffer a -4 penalty to any saves or checks made while on the rope. In all other ways, this item is identical to a normal *rope of climbing*.

Weapons

Crossbow of Angling: This appears to be a quite normal light crossbow, although it has a thick wrist strap attached which is of unusual design and toughness. On command it can fire bolts with special properties up to three times per day. The magical bolt fired counts as a +2 *bolt* for determination of attack rolls (and damage if appropriate). When fired, this special bolt is trailed by a pencil-thin snaking line of faint blue light (which radiates magic fairly strongly) which connects it to the crossbow. When the bolt impacts, the head expands into a small claw which embeds itself in the target, such that the bolt grips it strongly. By the use of a second command word the crossbow user can "reel in" the target, the thin "cord" of magical energy shrinking to drag the target to the archer.

The speed at which the target is retrieved depends on its weight, friction, etc.; the maximum speed is 60 feet per round. The DM may need to exercise his judgement in most cases. If the target is heavier than the archer or is immovable or braced in some way, then the crossbowman may actually be dragged to the target rather than the reverse applying. This can be exploited, of course, to pull a thief up to a ceiling or up a wall. The magical cord is AC -2 and takes 15 points of damage (nonmagical weapons do no damage) to destroy.

Dagger of Impaling: These daggers are +2 to hit and damage, and on a natural roll of 20 (and also of 19 if this is sufficient to score a hit) on a backstab attack they impale the target, inflicting an additional 1d4+2/1d3+2 points of damage and also staying in the wound, where they cause an additional 1d4+2/1d3+2 points of damage each round until removed.

Dagger of Resource: These daggers usually have handles of ebony or ivory, or some similarly valuable and exotic substance, and have 1d3+1 small studs in the cross guards. The dagger has attack and damage bonuses, but it also has additional tools located within it, and depressing one of the studs will cause the corresponding item to spring from the hilt of the dagger, ready for use (only one tool

at a time can be used). These bonuses and tools depend on the number of studs in the weapon, as shown below:

No. of studs	Hit/ damage bonus	Tools avail.	Description of tools
2	+4	2	Lock picks adding +5% to Open Locks rolls, plus tool for removing stones from horses hooves'
3	+3	3	As above, plus <i>Lens of Detection</i> (see DMG p.173)
4	+2	4	As above, plus <i>Gem of Brightness</i> with 3d10 charges

Dagger of Sounding: This oddly-designed dagger is +1 for attack and damage determination, but it has a peculiar, hollow bronze bulb at the end of its pommel. If this is gently tapped against a hollow surface, it gives a resounding ring quite different from the dull tone emitted if struck against solid stone. Tapping it gently against walls allows the thief a 5 in 6 chance for finding a secret door, rising to 11 in 12 if the thief is elven or half-elven. Also, the thief can search for secret doors at twice the normal rate when using this dagger. In other cases, the thief is 80% likely to be able to determine successfully the approximate thickness and nature of the material the dagger is used to sound.

Scabbard of Poison: These scabbards have reservoirs in which poison can be stored, and when a blade is placed in the scabbard and then drawn, the venom will automatically and magically be drawn from the reservoir to coat the blade. The venom will be wiped from the blade after one successful hit on a target, or evaporate after 2d4 rounds in any event. Any venom can be used, for the dweomer gives the venom virulence against whatever creature is struck. The scabbard holds enough poison for six doses, but must be manually refilled when empty. 25% of these scabbards are the right size for long swords, 25% suitable for short swords, and 50% for daggers. All restrictions which apply to the use of poison weapons apply here, of course, and only evil characters would routinely use such a device.

Short sword of Backstabbing: In the hands of any character this is a +2 magical weapon, but in the hands of a thief it is especially potent. When a thief makes a backstab attempt with this short sword, it allows him to attack as if four levels higher than his actual experience level, with corresponding improvements in THAC0, attack rolls, and damage multiplier on a successful hit.

Special Results

If the DM rolls a "Special" result from Table 32, then a unique item should be developed for the thief. This takes careful work by the DM to design the item, and also to determine a suitable history for it. Multi-property items in the listings above (such as the *potion of perception*, *boots of balance*, *amulet of dramatic death*, etc.) can be taken as inspirations. A specially-designed item should have several functions, none of exceptional strength, and with an emphasis on protection and nondetection rather than strong offensive potential.

A history for the item is well worth the effort. One obvious possibility is that someone, sometime,

will come to try and get the item back! Certain NPCs may be hunting the previous wearer/user of the item, and while they do not have a description of the previous user they know what the item looks like. Perhaps they have been hired to do away with that previous user. So, when they see it on the person of the PC . . . The history of the item can have great potential for adventure locked within it, which the DM doesn't need to exploit immediately. Also, the player whose character gets the item should not be told the history of the item; that's something he will have to find out for himself and, again, there may be adventures locked within this search. This is especially true if command words are needed to activate certain properties.

Don't make too much of such items, or other players may feel their characters are being put in the shade and overshadowed by all the attention the thief is getting. But a unique item, something the thief knows he is the only person on Oerth (or Krynn or in the Forgotten Realms) to have, adds color and character to any adventuring party!

Chapter 6: The Arts of Deception: Classic Cons

The old rogue slurped his ale noisily, complaining to the bartender, "The thieves these days, they've lost the art of it all. Like a bloody bunch of bandit half-orcs: Their idea of an elegant theft is a rich victim bashed neatly on the head, so his fancy clothes don't get scuffed so much and can be fenced more dear." The young bartender raised his eyebrows, a little wary but curious about what the wizened old coot had to say. "Now, in my day, the thief we all looked up to was one whose only weapons were his wits and a steady, speedy hand. It would be hours before his victim even knew'd he was robbed, and then he couldn't be sure who done it.

"There was this one guy, Willie—Cool Willie, they called him, 'cause he never lost his cool. He know'd ALL the scams . . . "

Since day one, there have been people eager to get a free ride, to swindle others out of anything they can. These people, it has been observed, are typically the best targets for the swindler. After all, how likely are you to report a con man, when the reason he succeeded was that you thought you were taking advantage of him? Playing off other peoples' greed is the key to a successful swindling career, on whatever scale it is performed.

An astute swindler is always on the lookout for opportunities for a good racket. Some of these situations and scams have been nearly immortalized, and are classics: Not only does it seem everyone knows them, but everyone still uses them—and they still work. An excellent book filled with real-life anecdotes of classic cons is *The Compleat Swindler*, by Ralph Hancock with Henry Chafetz (New York: Macmillan, 1968).

What follows is a sampling of scams for the novice pigeon plucker.

Short-Change Swindles

On the simple level, you have the short-change swindle. This is something you do to merchants—or merchants do to you! Through fast-talk, distraction and sleight-of-hand, you trick them into giving you as change more money than you paid them.

The story at the end of this chapter illustrates the short-change swindle.

Gambling

Gambling is a finer racket. Gambling is irresistible to many people, and the swindler loves to

take advantage of this weakness. Every sort of gambling—dice, coin-matching, the shell game, races and gladiatorial contests (the fantasy equivalent of modern organized sports)—presents an opportunity for the swindler to make a load of silver. A swindler needs gambling proficiency to work any of the following scams, and any other character who makes a gambling proficiency check will probably be wise to the swindler's tricks.

Dice Games: Dice-throwing developed in ancient times, and has remained popular since (even into RPGs). An astute gambler understands the odds of winning in any dice game, such as craps, and a skilled swindler knows how to rig the game in his favor. Loaded dice (with imperceptibly rounded faces, or weighted pips, and so forth) are one way, but the true master can even throw dice so that they will land as he wishes. To do this trick, a swindler must make a successful pick pockets roll, at -40%, for each die.

Coin Matching: Coin matching is a simple, age-old game, appearing in various forms since the days of the pharaohs, and is simple to run a scam around.

The favorite variation for two swindlers working a sucker is “odd man wins”; Three coins are tossed, or revealed simultaneously (like the rock-paper-scissors game). If two are heads or tails, and the other is the opposite, the holder of the odd coin wins. If all three are the same, no one wins.

To set this up as a scam, there should be two swindlers. One plays the steerer, gaining the confidence of the pigeon, while the other pretends to be a foolish stranger. The steerer conspires with the real target, ostensibly to swindle the money of the stranger, his true partner. In the course of the game, the steerer winds up with all the money.

Of course, he's not able simply to share it with the pigeon, since they've supposedly just pulled a fast one on the foolish stranger. They have instead agreed beforehand to meet somewhere and share the spoils. Of course, the steerer never shows up to share and the would-be con artist is left penniless. Furthermore, since he was duped on account of his own greed, trying to do what was done to him, he'll probably swallow his chagrin and never report the incident to the local authorities!

The Shell Game: The shell game is another age-old classic. The swindler sets up at some event, like a circus, fair, or even a busy street corner. He has a single pea and three shells, which he rearranges. It is a test of observation, he says: Anyone who can identify which shell covers the pea, after they've been shifted around, will win whatever he bet. If he guesses wrong, he loses his money.

Someone takes on the challenge, and wins! Of course, this is an accomplice of the shell man (known as a “capper”). The crowd thinks the swindler is playing honestly. Then a real target places his bet. He, too, will win. The swindler will nurse the target's self-confidence to raise the stakes, and then (mysteriously!) the victim's powers of observation will decline, and he'll fail to spot the right shell! This of course is done through sleight-of-hand. (To do it unnoticed, the thief needs to make a successful pick pockets roll.)

Quackery

Quackery is the realm of the mountebank, the seller of “snake oil” and all manner of exotic potions, unguents and charms, each supposed to be a medical wonder, but usually worthless (if not actually dangerous to its user). Even in a world where magic is real, quacks can make brisk profits from those who cannot tell a real potion from fake.

Forgery and Counterfeiting

Forgery may also be a swindler's calling, including counterfeiting. Interestingly, forgery was not a serious crime in the middle ages; barter took precedence above coinage or credit notes, and it's

hard to counterfeit a bushel of wheat or forge livestock.

As the Renaissance came, however, and banking developed, so did the forger's art—and the punishments became serious. As late as the first half of the 19th century in England, men and women were hanged for the crime of forging one-pound notes.

The value of forgery, therefore, and the risks involved, will depend on the nature of commerce and trade in your campaign.

Jewelry Swindles

For the well-trained rogue, jewelry swindles can be both the most lucrative and the easiest, because it is so difficult for the untrained eye to identify or to judge the value of a precious stone. Besides dealing in paste and glass fakes, jewelry swindlers may pass off a lesser stone as something more valuable (e.g., quartz for diamond), or pay someone (especially naive but treasure-laden adventurers) for a diamond as if it were quartz. A nimble-fingered rogue may also replace fake jewels for real ones, and the owner may never know the difference!

Sly NPC jewel swindlers are a great way for DMs to relieve characters lacking gem cutting proficiency of their cash and jewels (provided they don't spew out at the start, "The dragon's treasure includes 12 opals at 1,000 gp each").

"How much d'I owe ya?" asked the old rogue, upon finishing ale and tale.

"Four coppers," said the bartender.

The rogue fished in his pockets. "Hmm," he said. "All I have is this gold piece. Have ya got change?"

"Believe I do," said the bartender, taking the gold coin and putting out an electrum coin, four silvers, and six coppers in change.

"Say, why don't you get me a slab of cheese for the road?" asked the rogue, sliding over two coppers for it.

While the bartender retrieved the cheese from beneath the counter, the rogue opened his pouch to put the remaining coppers inside. "Well look here! Guess I had a silver after all!" he declared. He moved his hand toward the others, palming his new-found silver and hiding the electrum beneath the other coins, while appearing just to set the new silver coin with the rest. "Say," he tells the bartender. "I'd be hatin' to take all yer change like that. Why dontcha gimme an electrum for these five silvers?"

"Sure," said the bartender, handing him an electrum. The old rogue turned toward the door.

"Wait!" said the bartender. "Ye left an electrum coin here with the silver!"

"So I did! Thank you. Honesty's a difficult quality to find these days! Well, to keep you with enough change, why don't I just give you this silver"—he then produced the coin he had palmed—"and you give me back the gold piece?"

"All right," said the bartender. "Have a nice day, then!"

As he walked down the street from the tavern, five silvers richer, the old rogue permitted himself a grin and a little skip of delight. All these years, and Cool Willie hadn't lost his touch.

Robbing the Robbers

Thieves as a class are people who enjoy toeing the line, when it comes to risk-taking. Some renegade thieves take it a step further, often a step too far, and dare to steal from other thieves, or even thieves' guilds.

It's dangerous activity, but it does have certain advantages. Foremost, the guilds and thieves can't very well report thefts to the authorities (assuming they don't control those authorities through bribes or blackmail).

And, of course, authorities permit the theft of stolen items when its purpose is recovery, to return the goods to the original owner, as bounty hunters do.

Sanction and some degree of protection might also be gained from a rival guild. Mob wars provide many opportunities for the daring thief, willing to run around in the crossfire, scoring loot. The trick is not to be identified as stealing from the wrong people (i.e., the guild that wins in the end).

Perhaps the biggest advantage of all, and the reason that thieves will brave the risks, is the enormous wealth that can be concentrated in the hands of a single criminal, especially an important officer of the guild.

But there's no shortage of risks. First off, intelligent thieves understand themselves and, by extension, other thieves. Each thief needs to be a troubleshooter, in a way, designing protection for himself and his possessions, and making sure that it's proof at least against any thief of his skill or less. This means that in stealing from another thief, you can expect a fairly difficult job.

Sometimes, however, a thief may be surprisingly flippant about not protecting his wealth. The people who can get away with this are incredibly powerful crime lords, with vast wealth and myriad connections. They have the resources to find anyone who dares to steal from them and deliver a fitting punishment. Among such punishments, a simple assassination is very mild and humane.

Understand that the underworld is often harsher on thieves than the established authorities. The underworld does not presume innocence; and sweet revenge is more important to a wronged crime lord (and his ego and ruthless reputation) than the recovery of any but the most precious property.

Chapter 7: New Rules for Thieves

This section introduces rules of advanced complexity that players and DMs may wish to use in the campaign. While they are recommended for use in a gaming environment where thieves are common, they are not exclusively limited to the thief character.

As an exception to this generality, those optional rules that modify specific thief activities are, of course, useable only by thieves.

New rules are provided for lock and trap construction, removal, and modification; for specific animal training, tricks common and useful to thieves; to amplify the poison rules presented in the AD&D® 2nd Edition *Dungeon Master's Guide*; to allow thieves to possibly knock out a victim with a surprise blow from the rear; and to detail the encumbrance effects when armored characters attempt to perform acrobatics.

Advanced Locks and Traps

The game works perfectly well under the assumption that a lock is a lock, regardless of its make or mechanism. Traps generally earn greater detail ("a poison needle flicks out of the panel beside the lock," for example), but even so, the actual workings of the device are not usually described.

However, locks and traps are in fact found in great variety, and while many might provide little challenge to the skilled thief, some will prove daunting even to the most experienced veteran. A device can be listed with a modifier of + or - up to 30%, reflecting the ease or difficulty with which a thief might pick the lock or find and remove a trap. The modifier is applied to the thief's chance of success with the obstacle; a -30 lock, for example, lowers the thief's chances of picking it by 30%. If his normal percentage is 65%, then his chance with this lock is only 35%.

Describing Types

The more detail the DM can provide regarding the obstacle facing the thief, the greater the player's options in facing it.

Locks can include simple latches, keyhole locks with a single or multiple tumblers, puzzles that involve performing several procedures in a set sequence (pushing a stone, turning a handle, and pulling outward, for example).

Traps have many more varieties. Generally a moving part, such as a cage, block, blade, needle, sluice gate, or trapdoor, is triggered by the act of a character—a step on a surface, or a pull on a handle, for example.

A good trap design will include at least some vague description of how the two elements are connected. Levers, springs (both leaf and coil), pivots, bellows, deadweights, block and tackle, and hinges are all elements used in trap design.

Modifying Checks

The major considerations for determining the difficulty of a trap are the skill of the locksmith or trap maker, the materials used for the job, and the purpose of the lock or trap. Some examples for locks are listed:

- +15% Typical latch on small house, guest room of an inn, storage closet, etc.
- 0 Lock on a merchant's house, weapons locker, wine cellar of a large inn, etc.
- 15% Door to a cell or keep, security checkpoint within a dungeon, lock on a gem cutter's shop or moneychanger's house.
- 30% Lock on a major vault or most intricately designed cell door

These guidelines should be used by the DM to establish a variety of challenges in the campaign setting. The many varieties of traps are too great to list, but the same principle of modification applies.

The new equipment listed in Chapter 5 includes a variety of aids for just such delicate work. By utilizing greater detail in the description of a lock or trap, more opportunities for the use of this equipment will arise.

Building Better Locks

A character with locksmith proficiency can try to build a superior lock, but only if the proper materials are available. In most cases this means an iron or steel lock, though special considerations can be adjudicated by the DM. The locksmith must make a proficiency check for the lock. A roll of 1 or less indicates a lock of superior craftsmanship. Subtract 1 from the die roll for every proficiency slot *beyond the first* spent on the locksmith skill. For example, a craftsman with three slots of locksmith skill creates a superior lock on a roll of 1, 2, or 3.

The modification for such a specific lock is determined by rolling 1d10, resulting in a 1-10% modifier. Each improved lock will be at least as good as the one before it, however, so re-roll results that are lower than the modifier for a previous lock made by that same smith. When the locksmith makes locks with a 10% modifier, he is allowed to roll 2d10. When he reaches 20%, he receives

3d10, but is no longer guaranteed to beat his previous high roll. He does get to roll 3d10 until he gets a result of 20 or greater, however.

For example, a locksmith builds a superior lock and rolls a 7% modifier. On his next superior lock, he rolls and discards a 6, 3, and 5, before rolling a 10. He keeps the 10, since that is the first roll to equal or beat his previous high of 7. On his next superior lock, he rolls 2d10, using the first adjusted roll of 10 or higher. If he eventually gets a 20, he rolls 3d10 until he gets a result of 20 or greater. All his subsequent superior locks, then, will gain at least 20% modifiers, with the occasional one perhaps as high as 30%.

Multiple Locks

A simpler way to make a room or chest more secure against thieves is simply to protect it with more than one lock. Iron-bound chests with two or three built-in locks were not uncommon in rich treasure vaults. Certainly a powerful and suspicious wizard would not entrust his spellbooks to a cabinet with only a single lock.

Lockpicking/Trap Removing Noise

A thief attempting to open a lock or remove a trap with complete stealth can try to do so. He suffers a -10% chance to his ability rating, but will perform the task quietly on any roll except 01-10%. In the latter case the lock or trap makes a sharp click, snap, or other sound, audible to anyone within earshot.

If a thief fails a silent attempt, he cannot try to open the same lock normally.

Animal Assistants

A thief with an exceptional ability at animal handling and training can sometimes train creatures to assist him in his profession. This section discusses three possible creature assistants: dogs, ferrets, and monkeys. Other types can be used given the approval of the DM; develop and define the abilities of the animal using these three as examples.

All animal training acts described below are useable with the standard proficiency rules. The main additions are specific tasks that can be learned by these creatures.

When an animal learns one of the specific tasks below, its chance of performing the task are determined by the proficiency of its trainer. The proficiency check required of the animal is the same as for its trainer. For example, a ferret is trained to fetch gems by a character with three slots of animal handling proficiency and a Wisdom of 15. He needs a proficiency check of 17 or less to train the ferret for the task. The ferret, consequently, needs a roll of 17 or less to fetch the gems properly.

Players should record the stats for animals on the PC character sheet. List the tasks each animal has been trained for, recording this proficiency number beside the notation.

At the DM's option, some animals may have such exceptional intelligence, or strength, or speed, that their ratings are granted a +1 or, rarely, a +2 modifier to specific tasks.

Dogs can serve primarily as protectors, requiring little training before they become alert and aggressive watchdogs.

Dogs can also be trained to track a character or other animal. The dog requires some scent information about the object being tracked and a general location of the trail. A proficiency check is made to find the trail. Another check must be made every 1-4 turns, and also whenever the trail takes an

unusual turn (through water, along tree limbs, etc). Dogs specially bred for this (including many hounds) gain a +1 or +2 to this particular ability.

Dogs can sometimes be trained to perform the “Thief’s Fetch” trick, below. Generally, small and nimble dogs are used for this task.

Ferrets can fit through openings as narrow as 2", and thus have an ability to go places other animals cannot. Ferrets can be taught the “Thief’s Fetch” trick to acquire gems, coins, or other small objects.

Monkeys are the most adaptable of these animals. A monkey can be trained to be selective in its fetching. Gateways, high windows, and other obstacles can easily be traversed by a monkey. A monkey will fight to defend itself if cornered or seized.

Monkey: AC 7; MV 12(9 climbing); HD1/2; THAC0 20; Dmg 1-4

The Thief’s Fetch

Animals can be trained to retrieve specific types of items from a general area such as a room or yard. Specific objects include coins, gems, jewelry such as chains or bracelets, or even items of food and drink. Additional training sessions can train the animal to perform its task with stealth.

The animal can be sent by gesture in a specific direction. It will seek for some time in the area indicated, finally returning to its master. Generally, the animal will spend 1d8 turns on the search. However, additional training sessions can add another 1d8 turns to this duration.

If an animal is discovered or frightened during this task, it will attempt to flee to its master. It can be trained to flee in a different direction, or even to attack, if a good trainer takes the time to do so.

Poison and Sedatives

The DMG provides detailed rules on poison types and effects. The following rules add several types of non-lethal poisons, introduce poison gases, and describe some poison antidotes.

Sedatives are ingested poisons that disable, rather than injure, a character. A sedative can be administered in food or drink, with different rates and effects:

Method	Onset	Weakness	Duration
Eaten	4-40 min.	1-6 min.	2-12 hours
Drunk	2-12 min.	1-6 min.	1-4 hours

Sedatives are treated as regular poisons, except that their first effect is a period of weakness when all ability scores and the character’s movement rate are reduced to half. This lasts 1d6 rounds, after which the character saves vs. poison. Failure renders him unconscious. Success means that the weakness lasts for another hour. The character then saves each hour, with the weakness remaining until a successful save is made.

Poison Gases are rare, expensive, and highly dangerous. A typical dose is a clay or glass jar weighing 5 pounds. If the jar is shattered or opened, gas fills a 10' x 10' x 10' cube. It disperses after one round unless contained on all sides. The gas lasts for 2d6 turns in an enclosed room; 2d6 rounds in a room with at least one open door, window, arrow slit, etc.

It might be possible for creative players to create larger doses of poison gas, but such lethal devices are left to the DM’s discretion.

Poison gases generally have the effects of poison type D, taking effect after one or two minutes, inflicting 30 points of damage (2d6 with a successful save). The damage is inflicted each turn the character breathes the gas.

An extremely lethal poison gas is reputed to exist, similar to poison type J (onset in 1d4 minutes, causes *death* or 20 points of damage with save).

Unlike injected or ingested poisons, however, poison gas does not remain in a character's system after death. Thus, attempts to raise characters who have perished this way do not have to contend with the venom in the character's system.

Poison Antidotes

(Optional Rule)

In AD&D® 2nd Edition rules, a character with healing proficiency is able to aid poisoned individuals. This is described in Chapter Five of the *Player's Handbook*. We reproduce those rules here with additional options, including ones for those campaigns that are not using nonweapon proficiency rules.

Campaigns without

Nonweapon Proficiencies

Treat rangers, characters with forester secondary skills, and thieves with the kits assassin, bounty hunter, and scout as having herbalism proficiency; treat clerics and paladins as having healing proficiency; and treat druids as having both.

Healing Proficiency

and Poison

The basic healing proficiency rules for poison, from the *Player's Handbook*, are as follows.

A character with healing proficiency can attempt to aid a poisoned individual, provided the poison entered through a wound. If the poisoned character can be tended immediately (the round after the character is poisoned) and the care continues for the next five rounds, the victim gains a +2 to his saving throw (delay his saving throw until the last round of tending). No proficiency check is required, but the poisoned character must be tended to immediately (normally by sacrificing any other action by the proficient character) and cannot do anything himself. If the care and rest are interrupted, the poisoned character must immediately roll a normal saving throw for the poison. This result is unalterable by normal means (i.e., more healing doesn't help). Only characters with both healing and herbalism proficiencies can attempt the same treatment for poisons the victim has swallowed or touched (the character uses his healing to diagnose the poison and his herbalist knowledge to prepare a purgative.)

Note that these rules concern antidotes only obliquely, through the herbalism proficiency in instances of ingestive and contact poisoning.

Antidote Effects

Antidotes can be manufactured for most poisons. To use an antidote you must match it with its poison (see the assassin kit), or just administer an antidote and hope that by chance it is the right one. (The DM may permit the existence of some antidotes that counter more than one poison, e.g., both

types A and B injected.) An antidote will take effect if administered immediately or at least before the toxin's onset time. It then either negates the poison entirely (if the poisoned character made his saving throw in the first place) or reduces its effect to saving throw level.

Producing Antidotes

Most of the time an antidote has not been prepared in advance, and a character with herbalism proficiency will attempt to produce an antidote from scratch.

Doing this presupposes an assortment of herbs, mosses, and such necessary materials, already selected and close at hand (e.g., gathered, dried and stored in a pouch). If the herbalist needs to gather the materials as well (and there are materials around to be gathered—not the case in most dungeons), at least half an hour is required to do so. When materials are available, putting together and administering an antidote takes 1d6+4 (5-10) minutes.

If time for gathering materials and making the antidote turns out to be greater than the poison's onset time, the efforts are in vain. If not, a proficiency check must be made to determine the antidote's success or failure. The check suffers a -10 penalty if the poison has not been identified. If the check is successful, the antidote takes effect.

For example, the assassin Therius is adventuring with his companion, Orlene, when she is struck by a poisoned blade. The opponent is swiftly dispatched and Therius turns his attention to her wound. Orlene, meanwhile, has failed her saving throw. The DM knows that the poison is Type O, injected, with an onset time of 20 minutes; he notes this information secretly. One minute has already gone to finishing combat. If the poison is not successfully treated, Orlene will be left paralyzed for nine hours.

Therius is a 7th level thief (assassin kit) with herbalism proficiency and Intelligence 14; he does have a kit of useful herbs with him just for such emergencies as this.

He first sets out to identify the poison. His base chance is 35% (7th level) + 5% (Int 14) = 40%. This is his chance of learning from Orlene's symptoms. He rolls a 48 on percentile dice and fails. His next attempt is by sight, examining the slain opponent's blade, with a 20% chance of success. This also fails. Concerned about time (three minutes have already ticked by), Therius puts a dab on his tongue. He needs to roll 35 or lower . . . and gets a 26! He spits out the poison, recognizing it as type O. The DM doesn't bother to see if the poison affects Therius, since a paralytic poison at half strength would have no effect.

Therius works to produce an antidote with the materials in his pouch. This takes him six minutes. He then makes a proficiency check, needing a 12 or lower (because herbalism has a -2 modifier—see *Player's Handbook*, Chapter Five) for success. He rolls a 13—failure! Nine minutes have ticked by. He hurriedly attempts again to concoct the antidote. This time it takes a full 10 minutes . . . Therius rolls a 9 this time, however, so he succeeds just in the nick of time.

The antidote totally halts the paralytic poison, since that is what the result of a successful saving throw would have been.

Mugging—the Thief's KO

A thief can attempt to knock out a victim under certain circumstances by striking from behind with a blunt instrument. In order to be eligible for a mugging attack, a target must be eligible for a *backstab*, as explained in Chapter Three of the *Player's Handbook*. In addition to all restrictions governing a backstab, a thief cannot mug a victim more than twice as tall as the thief.

The eligible thief character simply makes a mugging attack instead of a normal backstab. The thief

gains his +4 backstab bonus and the victim loses shield and Dexterity bonuses. If helmets are detailed in the campaign, the victim has AC 10 unless the head is protected.

If the thief scores a hit, the victim must make a saving throw versus petrification or fall unconscious for 2d8 rounds. Modify the saving throw by the difference in level or hit dice between the mugger and the victim.

For example, Pwill the thief (T9) sneaks up behind the ogre sentry (4 HD). Pwill's blow is successful, so the ogre saves as a level 4 warrior. Normally he would save on a 12 or better, but the difference in Pwill's level (9) and the ogre's HD (4) modifies his necessary save to 17. However, the DM rolls a 19 for the ogre, so Pwill's attempt only makes the sentry mad. And loud.

Armor and Acrobatic Proficiencies

This system of modifiers for armor other than the usual leather may be used for non-thief characters as well as those thieves who may be found wearing heavier protection.

Elfin chain mail is light and thin and can be worn under normal clothing. All other types of armor except simple leather are stiff or bulky, and can only be covered by a full body cloak.

Jumping: For an acrobat wearing armor and attempting a jumping maneuver other than pole vaulting, compute the height or length of the jump as described in the *Player's Handbook*, Chapter Five. Then adjust this distance according to the armor of the character, as shown on Table 37. Should the resulting total be less than zero, the character fails the acrobatic feat entirely (probably by tripping and landing flat on his face).

Pole vaulting is a different matter. To successfully get off the ground in armor bulkier than leather requires a proficiency check, adjusted, as indicated on Table 37, according to the pole vaulter's armor. In addition, a pole vaulter with armor heavier or bulkier than studded or padded can vault no higher than the height of the pole.

Tightrope Walking: Adjustments listed on Table 37 indicate the penalties associated with each sort of armor if it is worn while tightrope walking. The DM should also take into account how heavy the character and all his armor, weapons and equipment are, and whether the rope or beam or other surface on which the character walks is capable of supporting such weight.

Tumbling: Defensive and offensive tumbling maneuvers are limited by the use of armor. As the *Player's Handbook* states (Chapter Five), a character with tumbling proficiency can improve his armor class by 4 against attacks directed solely at him in any round of combat, provided he has the initiative and forgoes all attacks that round. The row "Tumbling—Defensive" on Table 37 indicates what AC bonus, if any, the character can get when he is wearing various sorts of armor. When in unarmed combat, a character with tumbling proficiency is also normally able to improve his attack roll by 2. The bonus, if any, that the character has when in armor is shown in the row "Tumbling—Attack."

The third function of tumbling proficiency is the ability to avoid falling damage. If the character makes a successful proficiency check, he takes only half damage from falls of 60 feet or less, and none from falls of 10 feet or less. Modifiers to this proficiency check are listed in the row "Tumbling—Falling."

Table 37:
EFFECTS OF ARMOR ON ACROBATIC PROFICIENCIES

Skill	No Armor	Elfin Chain	Studded or Padded	Hide	Ring or Chain	Brigandine or Splint	Scale or Banded	Plate Mail	Plate Armor
Broad jump, Running	+1'	—	-1/2'	-3'	-5'	-7'	-10'	-15'	-20'
High jump, Running	+1'	-1/2'	-1'	-2'	-4'	-8'	-10'	-20'	-18'
Broad jump, Standing	+1/2'	—	-1/2'	-2'	-3'	-4'	-5'	-7'	-10'
High jump, Standing	+1/4'	—	-1/2'	-1'	-2'	-2 1/2'	-2 1/2'	-3'	-3'
Pole vaulting	—	-1'	-1'	-3'	-5'	-8'	-10'	-12'	-15'
Tightrope Walking	—	-1	-1	-3	-5	-6	-8	-10	-12
Tumbling Defensive	+4	+4	+3	+1	+2	+1	0	0	0
Attack	+2	+2	+2	0	+1	+1	0	0	0
Falling	—	-1	—	-3	-5	-6	-8	-10	-12

General Notes: Leather armor is taken to be the standard, with no positive or negative adjustment to thief skills. No dexterity bonuses apply to thief functions (though penalties do) when wearing armor other than simple leather.

1. This category applies when wearing *bracers of defense* or a cloak, but no large protective devices.
2. Includes bronze plate mail.
3. Encompasses both field plate and full plate armor.
4. (Table 38) Assumes that armor worn is covered by another garment. Elfin chain mail is light and thin, and can be worn under normal clothing. All other types of armor except simple leather are stiff or bulky, and can only be covered by a full body cloak.

Armor and Thief Skills

Rogues traditionally wear no more than leather armor, since garb any more bulky greatly hinders the traditional abilities of thieves. The *Player's Handbook* notes the benefits or penalties of wearing no armor, elfin chain, and studded or padded leather armor, since these options are also available to thieves. In some instances thieves will be found wearing still other sorts of armor. Multi-classed demihumans and dual-classed humans, for instance, may have fighter or cleric as one of their classes, and may therefore be permitted any sort of armor whatsoever.

Thieves using the disguise proficiency also should be permitted to wear armor not normally used by their class, to aid the deception. (Otherwise it becomes obvious that anyone in leather armor who refuses to don chain mail must be an assassin or spy.)

For this reason we offer expanded rules to cover the effects of the heavier and bulkier armor types on thieves' skills. Table 38 lists the adjustments accorded to each armor type.

Table 38:
EFFECTS OF ARMOR ON THIEF SKILLS

No	Elfin	Studded	Ring or	Brigandine	Scale or	Plate	Plate
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Skill	Armor	Chain	or Padded	Hide	Chain	or Splint	Banded	Mail	Ar-
Pick Pockets	+5%	-20%	-30%	-60%	-40%	-40%	-50%	-75%	-95%
Open Lock	—	-5%	-10%	-50%	-15%	-15	-20%	-40%	-80%
Find/Remove Traps	—	-5%	-10%	-50%	-15%	-25%	-20%	-40%	-80%
Move Silently	+10%	-10%	-20%	-30%	-40%	-40%	-60%	-80%	-95%
Hide in Shadows	+5%	-10%	-20%	-20%	-30%	-30%	-50%	-75%	-95%
Hear Noise	—	-5%	-10%	-10%	-20%	-25%	-30%	-50%	-70%
Climb Walls	+10%	-20%	-30%	-60%	-40%	-50%	-90%	-95%	-95%
Read Languages	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—

Notes 1-4: See Table 37.

No skill can have a chance of success (including all adjustments) greater than 95%. However, a character can always have a 1% chance of success, even when trying to pick pockets in full plate armor.

Option: Some DMs may permit thieves to wear any available armor. For most thieves, however (especially at low levels), it isn't worthwhile to wear bulkier armor because the penalties cripple thievery skills. A rogue could favor bulk anyway, but DMs should emphasize (a) if the player wants a fighting machine he should play a fighter, (b) the thief can't gain experience and increase skill in thieving abilities that he doesn't use.

Chapter 8: The Thief Campaign

Terrak, the Master, looked through the hazy air of the hideout. The acrid scent of charcoal smoke mingled with the sweat dripping freely from his assembled thieves. Indeed, the air in the attic remained always fetid, for even on a cool night such as this they dared not open any passage to the outside. So precarious was their position in the city, so firm was the Black Duke's grip on the populace, that any hint of their presence here would bring swift and brutal reprisal.

For the hundredth time, Terrak examined the members of his small band. They were brave men and women, and he trusted them all. They were bound to him not by any bonds of love—though he knew they respected him—but instead by a common, flaming hatred. He wondered, again, if such a ragged assemblage could actually be a threat to one as mighty as the Duke. But then he sighed, knowing they had no choice.

Straight across from him, Terrak saw Ardina, the weaver. The old woman practiced her trade skillfully during the day, and none suspected that her bottles of dye, or her carefully wrapped bundles of cloth, were used to smuggle the gains of the band around the city, and even to locations beyond the high wall. Even now the band gathered in the attic of her shop, since she had risked her cover and her life to provide them this temporary hideout.

Wistfully, Terrak remembered the guildhall, built with the profits of his long labors, and even the sweat of his own brow. The building had contained secret passages, hidden compartments, deadly traps, and easily defensible combat stations. But it had all gone up in smoke when the Black Duke's enforcers had attacked. Terrak's eyes misted as he thought of Serana, his beautiful, young Serana, calling to him with her last words before the flames had taken her, had taken so many of them.

But the Master Thief hardened his mind and his plans. Indeed, it had been those same precautions, the secret doors and the hidden compartments, that had allowed this small remnant of his band to escape. Now they gathered here, dry kindling awaiting the spark that would ignite the flames of their

revenge.

Terrak turned to an old man beside him. “And so, Rorden, the Duke’s treasury awaits us now?”

The man nodded his balding head. Terrak reminded himself that the man was not as old as he looked. The Duke, however, had seized Rorden’s wife for use as a concubine many years earlier. By threatening her with death, the ruler had forced the talented Rorden to keep his books and provide him with information. Now, the Duke’s threat to claim the man’s daughter for a similar fate had finally driven Rorden to fight against his brutal lord.

“Indeed, Master.” Rorden spread a piece of parchment on the floor. “You see here the layout of the Duke’s mansion. I have marked the secret passage to the vault, though I could not gain the key to the lock. I am sorry, but the Duke keeps it on a key around his neck.”

Terrak waved away the man’s apology. Once they found the lock, he knew Xeno could open it. Indeed, the lockpicker even now instinctively flexed his fingers and licked his lips. Xeno, too, had lost his woman in the Duke’s raid. Terrak knew he would perform with skill on this night.

“And the painting?” asked Terrak, carefully watching the other members of his band. He saw Rocko flex unconsciously, grasping the stump of his right arm with his left hand. Rocko had lost his hand as a mere boy, when the Duke’s watchmen had caught him stealing bacon in the marketplace. Rocko was brave, but not terribly bright. He, of all of them, had expressed the most misgivings about the plan to steal the piece of art along with the Duke’s treasury of gems.

“Remember, the Duke is ruled by his vanity above all else,” Terrak reminded them, directing his measured stare at the unflinching Rocko. “That painting of himself, the work he paid thousands of gold pieces for that it may hang in his great hall, serves as a symbol of his vanity. It has left a bitter taste in the mouths of the entire city. Its theft will put a large dent in the Duke’s armor of rulership!” (At least, I hope it will!), Terrak concluded silently.

“Now, the challenges,” the Master Thief continued. He looked at Kyrin, to his left.

“I will have the wagon ready,” the girl answered solemnly. She had been just old enough to understand her loss when her parents had died in the inferno of the guildhouse. Terrak knew that she spoke the truth.

“Here are the magic mouths.” Terrak gestured at the parchment as Rorden nodded.

“My spell of silence will be ready,” nodded another thief, a thin and wiry man of indeterminate age. Only the golden sheen of his blond hair suggested his true race. The half-elf was a skilled thief, but at times his talents as a magic-user were even more valuable to the band.

“These walls are oiled to prevent scaling,” explained Rorden, gesturing around the periphery of the courtyard.

A snicker came from a young woman across the room, and Terrak allowed himself a slight smile of his own. The Black Duke would need more than slippery walls to stop Bria the acrobat and her grappling hook. “Just remember to drop a rope for the rest of us,” reminded the Master.

“And finally, the guards,” pointed Rorden. “They are commanded by Puroch, whose loyalty the Duke extorts by holding his family at knifepoint.”

“The family is now safe in hiding?” asked Terrak, looking at the old weaverwoman.

She nodded with a toothless grin. “Puroch will join us now.”

Terrak looked again at his small, capable band. He knew them all, understood their strengths and their weaknesses. He would not betray them, and he knew they would not betray him.

“We cannot hope that the theft of a painting and a few gems will bring the power of this duke crashing down,” he said softly. “But if, by this theft, we can force the entire city to see him for the madman he is—and his madness will be plain to all when he discovers the defaced painting hanging above the outer gate of his mansion!—we can do him great harm.”

“And too, we can pave the road to our return. Soon, my loyal comrades, we will become the

influential guild that we were once before!”

Elements of the Thief Campaign

The thief campaign resembles any other AD&D® game campaign in many respects: There must be a challenge for the PCs to face, the challenge must be balanced to the strength of the characters, and the rewards must be enjoyable enough to keep everyone having a good time—but not so abundant as to drastically inflate the finances of your campaign world.

But it is in the specifics of play that some of these campaign aspects can take on unique and entertaining features when applied to a campaign involving many thief characters.

This section explores some of these features, providing detail to DMs and also players.

Cultural Considerations

The cultural overview of the campaign setting is an important consideration for the adventuring careers of all PCs, none more so than the thief. Some cultures have a strong and deep-running tradition of thievery while others will be quite foreign to the concept.

Generally, the more primitive a civilization, the less the likelihood of a strong thief element within it. Savage tribesmen or aborigines, of course, have few possessions that a thief would deem worth stealing. While characters from these backgrounds might covet the possessions of other cultures, their methods of acquisition will be less subtle than those of a “civilized” thief.

Of course, nothing prohibits a character from a savage or barbarian background from joining the thief class. Ideally, the character will have the opportunity to learn a little about his chosen trade before he meets up with an experienced city watch patrol.

Rural cultures, too, will be less likely to provide interesting settings for thief adventures than will urban locales. Thief characters can of course learn their trades in small town or country settings, but unless they have a steady stream of travelers passing through from which to select their victims, such thieves will have difficulty maintaining a career of any long duration.

But perhaps an even more significant cultural consideration is the view of that culture towards personal property and an honest day’s labor. It is in this context that a city, with a strong class of merchants, an important economic system, and a reliance upon trade, becomes the ideal setting for the thief’s activities.

The culture of such a bustling city cannot help but give rise to laws and law enforcers, to objects of value, and to interesting inhabitants. All of these items, as they relate to the thief’s activities and opportunities, are discussed below.

The Social Campaign Environment

Thieves, more than any other character class, must interact with NPCs in order to utilize the full capabilities of their class. Unlike the fighter or the magic user, who can face an opponent from the safety of spell or missile range, or in the heat of melee combat, the thief must often communicate with his enemies, staying alive as much by his wits as by his strength.

It is incumbent upon the DM, of course, to provide the necessary environments for his players’ enjoyment. For thief characters, and particularly in a campaign with numerous thief-types, this means the creation of numerous NPCs, detailed sufficiently for smooth interaction with the PCs, and a society or culture with enough features to provide motivation and ambition to thieves and to allow plenty of room for adventure.

Some of the significant features of such a campaign include:

The Social Overview of Thieves

How does this society view thieves? Are they vigorously exterminated wherever they can be found? Are they encouraged to leave town by the closest available gate? Or are they an integral part of the city's infrastructure, contributing to its economic life every bit as directly (if not, perhaps, as constructively) as the trading of merchants?

The answers to these questions determine, to a great extent, what kind of status a thief might hold in the society. Of course, status is almost always enhanced by wealth, but a wealthy thief, in many societies, is still regarded as mere scum, however cleansed and sanitized he may be on the surface.

In areas where thieves are vigorously persecuted, thief characters will have to operate almost entirely underground. Even the location of such a major establishment of the thieves guild will be a carefully guarded secret. The guild headquarters might move around frequently, changing locations at the first hint of detection.

Thieves in these types of societies will probably need to have several alternate hideouts lined up, ready for use at a moment's notice. The number of thieves working together, whether in a guild or a more informal band, will be small. Paranoia among the members will be common, and even the hint of betrayal will likely meet with gruesome consequences.

Indeed, thieves in societies that strive to root them out will often be forced to resort to a cover occupation or identity, simply to maintain appearances with neighbors, casual acquaintances, and even curious members of the city watch. The development of the cover can involve as much time and detail as player and DM want to spend. In this type of culture, a thief's success at his cover can affect his fortunes every bit as much as his performance on the job.

While a cover provides a thief character with an inherent professional weakness, it can also provide wonderful opportunities for roleplaying. Additionally, a thief who works to preserve a cover might find himself working in an area that is normally closed to thieves. This entails a corresponding increase in the likelihood of encountering lucrative targets for theft. Also, there will often be a relative lack of competition from other thieves in such an environment.

Conversely, societies where thieves are at least tolerated, and those where thieves are accorded rank of some status, present thief player characters with other challenges. Because of the notoriously chaotic nature of the class, thieves are constantly adjusting the status of members within their ranks. Thieves who would succeed must struggle to stand out from the masses. Where every street has its cutpurses and every neighborhood its petty boss, the thief PC will find himself in the midst of savage competition. He will nearly always be forced to choose sides. Although this selection can include the choice of independent operations, of course, most thieves look upon those who are not declared friends as undeclared enemies. Competition from other thieves and thief organizations becomes a major conflict for these characters.

Detailed and Varied Non-Player Characters

Obviously, NPCs are a major part of any social campaign environment. For a campaign with major roles for thieves, this must be one of the primary areas of DM concern.

Details are important, as always. Because of the number of NPCs needed, DMs will probably want to develop a convenient shorthand procedure for keeping track of all these characters. It is not necessary, for example, to include stats and proficiencies and equipment for each shopowner and innkeeper in the player character orbit. Often a name for the character and a one or two word personal-

ity description will suffice to give the DM all he needs to roleplay the NPC in an interesting and consistent manner. (Remember, if the innkeeper is “greedy and bigoted” the first time the PCs encounter him, he is likely to be that way next time as well.)

Of course, NPCs who might logically be expected to enter combat with the PCs (guards, rival thieves, thugs, bullies, etc.) will need to be detailed with the relevant combat information. Other NPCs who fill the roles of the potential targets for PC thievery (merchants, nobles, dandies, caravaners, fences, influential criminals and thieves, etc.) will need additional information on valuables possessed, how those goods are secured—including notes on locks, traps, secret compartments, and the like—as well as enough combat information to allow the DM to quickly adjudicate an encounter should matters come to blows.

Chapter Twelve of the AD&D® 2nd Edition DMG includes valuable information on defining the personalities of NPCs (pg.114) and on creating fast, realistic characters when needed (pgs.115-117).

The DM, after working out an easy way of recording his NPCs, must then keep this information close at hand where it can be easily referenced. He is then ready for any encounters the characters might decide to find.

A variety of NPCs is every bit as important as the detail used to record them. In all campaigns, the player characters will interact with folks from all walks of life—in a thief campaign such interaction is common and expected.

Some of the NPCs will need to be peers of the PCs—fellow thieves and rogues inhabiting the same area. These NPCs can serve as rivals, temporary helpers, sources of information, and even sort of a measuring scale for the PC’s successes.

Thieves will often develop contacts with NPCs even lower in status than the thieves themselves. These characters can include beggars, urchins and orphans, harlots, and other low-life types. A stable of these NPCs can provide the PCs with a ready source of information (“Here’s a copper, kid—go and count the guards outside the storehouse for me!”), as well as providing a touch of believability to the campaign background. These low-life NPCs will, of course, have the same variety of personalities and abilities as other NPCs. Because the PCs represent persons of power to them, however, player character actions can have a great rebounding effect in their relations. For example, a thief that always shares a (however small) portion of his take with the gang of urchins constantly roaming the neighborhood will find those urchins to be useful lookouts and helpful, willing sources of information. The thief who spends his time cursing and kicking the youngsters away from his abode may just find them leading an elite unit of the city watch straight to his door.

Potential targets for robbery include a whole vast realm of NPCs: wealthy merchants, powerful nobles, influential foreigners, even thieves and other adventurers who have enjoyed a certain amount of financial success in their endeavors. A variety of characters is essential here because this gives the PCs the opportunity to determine for themselves what will be the site of the next furtive operation.

Here your group might try pacing the gaming sessions to give the players complete freedom of choice, while not burdening the DM with the task of detailing every mansion, noble house, and merchant shop in town. Simply use the expedient of closing a gaming session with the PC planning meeting for the next operation. Then, when the target for the theft has been selected, the DM has the next week (or next few hours, depending on how often you play) to prepare a detailed layout of the setting.

No campaign is complete without at least one, or ideally several, strong villains to serve as antagonists for the player characters. Villains, of course, do not have to be criminals or other low-life types. They can be nobles, government officials, law enforcement officials or magistrates, foreign ambassadors, powerful wizards or sinister clerics—in short, all types of characters can make good villains in a thief campaign. And don’t overlook the grandmaster of the thieves guild or some other powerful

criminal who might be a rival of the PCs; these kinds of long-running feuds can kindle the fires of many an extended campaign adventure.

Whoever the DM picks as a central villain for the campaign, a few general principles apply. The villain must be a powerful character—one who can inspire fear, or at least grudging respect, in the PCs. Power can be expressed in financial resources (an estate, fortress, collection of treasures, etc.), authority (such as a troop of guards or command of the city watch), personal abilities (such as magic powers, magical artifacts, combat skill and weaponry, or sheer intelligence or charisma), or, ideally, some combination of all these characteristics. Certainly in order to seem formidable, a villain's power must exceed the combined power of the PCs.

Scenes involving the villain should be paced and staged carefully—the PCs probably will not find him in a back alley rolling drunks. (If they do, that should tell them something about the drunk!) Villains, being powerful and influential individuals, are not stupid. When they are encountered, they will usually be surrounded by their lackeys and henchmen (some of these can be quite stupid, at the DM's option).

In fact, the villain's lackeys should be common antagonists of the player characters throughout the campaign. It is well worth a DM's time to develop some of these henchmen as detailed NPCs—minor villains in their own right. What is the Sheriff of Nottingham without his loyal house guards, after all?

Any villain worth his black mustache will have one or two escape routes planned from every location where he is likely to be encountered. These will only be used in emergencies, of course, but can serve an important campaign function in that, as a villain escapes from near-certain death time after time, the players will develop their own motivation in wishing to go after him and end the conflict once and for all. This resolution, ideally occurring after many gaming sessions, then becomes a major triumph in the PCs' careers. Of course, if they blow it, the last battle can make a glorious final chapter in a PC career . . .

A final category of NPCs, impossible to overlook in the thief campaign, are those characters entrusted with the enforcement of law, or justice, or power—whatever prevails in your campaign environment. Even should you have created an anarchistic society, people will take steps to protect their belongings and some of these steps usually involve big, tough fighters.

It is interesting and enjoyable to have several of these characters become very well-developed NPCs in the campaign. The gruff sergeant-major of the city watch, for example, might have a few stern words for the PCs each time they are apprehended. A villainous thug in charge of a platoon of mercenary guards might develop a personal grudge against the PCs that can grow into a major campaign storyline. Even a severe magistrate can be a recurring character, especially if PC lawbreakers are coerced into helping the forces of justice in exchange for their freedom, lives, or whatever.

The DM need not go overboard on details for these NPCs. After all, having 100 NPCs in the campaign isn't much use if the DM has to shuffle 100 pieces of paper every time a player character asks a question. It is best to work out to your own satisfaction the level of detail required for consistent, enjoyable play, while allowing a brief enough format that the DM does not become overwhelmed with recordkeeping and NPC creation.

Unique Buildings and Structures

Whether these are temples, fortresses, vaults, inns, palaces, or mansions, the buildings in a thieflly environment should be well detailed. Determine, as much as possible, details such as window placement, even on higher floors.

Features of construction can be important; a brick wall may prove easier to climb than a surface of

smooth plaster. Are there trees or clinging vines near the walls? Are the grounds well-maintained? (Many a thief has failed a move silently check because the leaves rustled beneath his feet!)

Add entertaining features to your buildings such as balconies, atriums, wide stairways with railings, chandeliers, swimming pools, secret passages, and so on. Hanging draperies can make wonderful emergency transportation, and a wine cellar, icehouse, or other specialized room can also be put to interesting use.

Experiment with unusual settings as well—just because your thieves adventure in a social environment doesn't mean that you can't put a dungeon under a noble's manor, or a hidden cavern leading to and from the lair of a rival band of thieves. After the PCs have plundered several houses, you might offer a tower or a pyramid for a change of pace.

Insomuch as a great portion of a thief's career might be spent skulking about the buildings of the campaign world, it is well worth the DM's time to prepare them carefully and imaginatively.

A Well-Defined Economic System

This can be as simple as consistent observation of the prices and costs listed in the Players Handbook, or as complicated and involved as a DM cares to make it. Because so many thieves measure their accomplishments in financial terms, however, some sort of consistent measure of worth is extremely important.

Another consideration within the economic system is the effect of theft on the items being re-sold. Certainly a jeweled tiara can be appraised at 1,000 gp. However, if word of its theft has traveled far and wide, PC thieves might have difficulty getting someone to pay half the listed amount.

Other aspects of economics often overlooked in a campaign can be very relevant for thieves. Bribes are often necessary in order to gain information or to persuade a guard to look the other way—keep rigorous track of this cost of doing business! Protection money might be offered by victims; conversely, if a merchant is paying protection money to someone else (a thieves guild, for example), those being paid will leave no stone unturned in seeking the one who has flaunted their warnings.

All such extra costs and hidden consequences should be determined by the DM, at least to the extent of their impact upon the campaign environment. It can be left up to the PCs to discover for themselves how these little extras can impact (perhaps even shorten!) their illicit careers.

Interesting Objects D'Art and Other Treasures

A well-defined cultural store of valuable objects always gives a thief something to think about, and can provide some wonderful impetus for roleplaying. ("I simply must have that last Van Hoot original!") These items add a great deal of color and life to a campaign, encouraging players and the DM alike to think in terms other than simply the gp value of a treasure. Indeed, a valuable art object may be worth far more than its base value to a collector. By the same token, such an object might be recognized far and wide as stolen property—a complication that can make disposal of the goods an adventure in its own right.

Part of this campaign aspect involves establishing a consistent economic system for the world, of course, as mentioned above. But taking the time to specify treasures and their worth within that economic system carries the concept to a level of detail that greatly enhances any campaign—but particularly one involving many thieves and their illicit activities.

Objects can be classified by type and artist, most obviously, but also by such things as materials (especially in the area of gems and jewelry), intricacy of design, and size.

It doesn't so much matter *what* you choose to invent and define here. It is more important for the

DM to create enough detail about some area that the most treasured pieces are known to one and all, and enough other facts about the art to allow PC thieves to make proper value judgements.

Of course, establishing an artistic level of a culture is an ingredient of any campaign. Thieves, however, are more apt to become involved in the gaining and losing of such items than are characters of other classes, and because of this the thief campaign calls for a little extra attention to be paid here.

Whether these objects are paintings, statues, jewelry or gemwork, tapestries or rugs, ornate crystal, or religious icons, a well-defined set of existing treasures helps a thief put his own acquisitions and losses into context. Dungeon Masters will find the time spent creating a detailed cultural and artistic background for the campaign well spent.

Player character thieves will doubtless find one or two more things that just might cause them to lick their chops.

Well-Defined Legal System

This does not mean that your campaign has to have a law-and-order basis with plenty of tough penalties for thieves, and a gung-ho team of watchmen and sheriffs to see that unlawful perpetrators are quickly apprehended.

Instead, a well-defined legal system in a campaign means that the DM must give careful thought to the role of law and order in the campaign culture. It is far more important for penalties to be consistent than for them to be harsh.

Once the DM has established a consistent legal structure for the society, a working knowledge of that structure should be communicated to the players.

In any event, the laws of a society will usually be formed to reflect the standards and expectations of the majority (or at least the most influential portion) of the populace.

As always, game balance is important here as well. Societies with harsh penalties for thievery tend to discourage such nefarious activities. Because of the risk involved, potential gains should be correspondingly higher than in locations with more easy-going magistrates.

A few words about specific penalties: While the death penalty for lawbreakers is not an unrealistic sanction in a medieval-based society—and, indeed, many a nail-biter of a rescue has pulled a character from the shadows of the gallows, headsman's axe, or whatever—it is not the most enjoyable thing to roleplay.

Far better to have a character who has gotten himself in deep trouble be subjected to leverage from the law, perhaps being coerced to betray his companions or spy upon a powerful rival thief in exchange for his freedom and pardon. This way the sanction is a device propelling the character into another adventure instead of a one-way ticket out of the campaign.

Counter-Thief Tactics

This is an area all too often neglected in campaign and city design. It reflects the truism that people who have been robbed, or who know they are susceptible to robbery, will take steps to guard their belongings.

Counter-thief tactics include structural features such as locks, walls, traps and alarms; NPCs such as guards, judges and investigators; magical procedures for locating lost objects or protecting items of value; and any other steps property-owners and societies might take to hamper the activities of thieves among them.

The degree of counter-thief tactics employed in a campaign can be a useful balancing tool for the

DM, as well as a source of endless challenge and adventure for the PCs. As with any roleplaying game situation, the degree of challenge should be compatible with the amount of reward offered. Not every small strongbox in a city will have magical locks and a full-time patrol of high-level guards.

However, the protections employed by a society to counter thievery will also relate directly to the amount of thievery to be expected. In places where robberies are common but wealth is valued, those who have the wealth will take vigorous steps to protect it.

Such protections do not all have to be of the common nature—extra guards, a trap built into the lock, etc. Some NPCs will certainly hide their loot in unexpected locations—the nightmare of many a cat-burglar. Another occasionally employed tactic is the substitution of some worthless object for the real thing. A nasty twist on this latter case has the thief actually stealing something harmful to himself or others. For example, the thief who has just poisoned his guildmaster with what he thought was a *potion of eternal youth* finds himself in a very awkward situation indeed.

Background of Interesting Conflicts

A thief campaign can probably run for a long time on the central conflict of “Haves vs. the Have-nots”. Players and DMs alike will find a lot more flavor and depth in a setting with a little broader background of conflict, however.

Conflicts appropriate to a thief campaign are little different from those that should liven up any campaign. Every social setting will have tension between the various legs of the power structure, whether these are ruling houses, political parties, or even different members of the same ruling family.

Conflict between different classes or social strata is another common point of tension in society. The rich might seek to dominate the poorer folk, who strive in their own right to gain a share of the good life. In a mercantile society there might be a middle class of merchants and artisans who seek to insulate their privileges from those less fortunate, while at the same time striving for financial betterment for themselves and their families.

Religious conflict is a common feature of campaigns, particularly appropriate in worlds with a wide pantheon of varied gods. Thieves and others can often be employed by the clerics of different temples in order to spy upon, pilfer, or sabotage the centers of rival religions.

Conflicts among thieves themselves, and obviously between the law and breakers of the law, should be standard features of the campaign. The conflict between a thieves’ guild and independent (usually player character) thieves has become a cliché, but it still creates a tense background for a thief’s activities. Just try to establish that this is not the only conflict around which the campaign is based.

Conflicts, as always, are most effective when they can be personalized. In a religious conflict, for example, detail the influential clerics on each side. If a thief PC encounters a challenge from an NPC thief working in the same territory, give that NPC a face and a personality. When conflicts are personalized, player characters develop a natural motivation and enthusiasm for their resolution.

Challenges To Thief Character Class Abilities

Finally, the thief campaign should ideally include a multiplicity of opportunities for thieves to employ their own unique talents. Most significantly, this means many opportunities to pick locks, to find and remove traps, to climb sheer surfaces, and so on.

The DM should additionally tailor the challenges to the specific type of adventure suitable to the thief or thieves in the campaign. A character with great proficiency in disguise, for example, should

have opportunities to use a cover identity, or to find work as a spy.

By successfully creating challenges that match the particular strengths of the player characters (of all classes), the PCs have a chance to carve out a solid niche for themselves in the campaign world.

The Thieves' Guild

Whether or not to place a guild in your campaign setting is a decision central to the gaming careers of your thief player characters. Guilds can provide many interesting conflicts, and also require a certain amount of DM commitment in order to exist believably in a campaign world.

Consequently, the creation of a guild is not a decision to be taken lightly. Of course, they are more or less standard in many gaming environments, and if everyone in the campaign expects there to be a thieves guild, there probably should be a guild.

Thieves guilds can provide many opportunities for adventure, as detailed in Chapter 4: Thieves Guilds. Many of the ideas there can be used in creating a guild for your own campaign environment.

Remember also, should you decide not to have a guild in your own campaign world, that the absence of a guild does not mean there aren't plenty of thieves running around out there, looking for their share of the spoils and working actively to defend their "turf."

Basic Storylines For Thief Campaigns

Perhaps the player character thieves will be content at the start of a campaign to plunder this noble mansion and that opulent gallery, staying one or two steps ahead of the city watch. Such campaigns require little planning beyond the next gaming session for the DM, and work well with players who can only attend occasional gaming sessions.

However, the repetition of objectives and motivations can prevent players from exploring the full possibilities of their characters and the game. Even if each mission involves a different setting, new monsters, and unique, challenging traps and NPCs, players and DMs alike may find themselves wanting more.

The addition of a basic storyline can add a theme tying the campaign together, giving the player characters a cause higher than mere plunder for their exploits. Storylines allow for greater development of NPCs, and also provide the PCs with more opportunities for interactive roleplaying (as opposed to combat and other physical encounters).

Several suggested storylines are presented here. Many dungeon masters prefer to create their own, and this is encouraged. The examples are brief enough that each campaign's will be specifically tailored for a unique fit.

The Great Artifact

This is the type of story that gets the old thieves talking late into the night, sipping their mugs and reminiscing wistfully about the big job that they never quite got around to.

The great artifact is a unique object, a one of a kind wand or gem or statue or anything else of tremendous worth. It is famed for its power (like a magic item) or its symbolic value (like the crown jewels of a proud government) or perhaps simply for its mindboggling worth financially (the mint or gold repository of a powerful city-state, perhaps). Occasionally, an artifact will combine features of all these types, and more. Objects labelled as "artifacts" in the AD&D® game system usually fall into this category.

Whatever its nature, some generalities about the theft of the great artifact apply. Its worth is fabu-

lous. Although it may not be sought by *everyone*, there are plenty who would give anything to own it.

The great artifact's acquisition should be a process requiring many gaming sessions. Perhaps several additional quests are required before the theft of the artifact can even begin—a key must be obtained before the magically warded chest can be opened, for example.

The protections of the artifact should be many, and their effectiveness should increase the closer the PCs get to their goal. These barriers should ideally include obstacles to the mental, as well as the physical, abilities of the characters. Often a great deal of planning and coordination can be required of a band of thieves, in order to pull off the theft everyone thought was impossible.

Indeed, there might be a body of lore surrounding the artifact. Player characters willing to do their homework might be able to find survivors of previous expeditions, or at least hear tales handed down from earlier years. Such cautionary tales, of course, may contain more fiction than fact. They may also be couched in obscure language (as, for example: “Beware the witching moon when the hog walks upon the water”), containing a meaning that only becomes clear when certain conditions come to pass.

The quest for the great artifact does not have to end with its acquisition, by the way. Once its removal becomes public knowledge, any object of such great value becomes the focus of attention for bounty hunters, master thieves, and whoever had the object stolen to begin with. Especially in the case of potent magic, the PCs might find themselves holding onto a lot more than they bargained for.

The Mysterious Client

The mysterious client is usually an NPC. He or she can be a player character, however, if that player is briefed by the DM privately beforehand.

However the client is played, the role is that of a person (or perhaps a deity) who contacts the main group of PCs and asks them to perform some task worthy of their thieflly abilities.

This storyline is easy to start because the client can always direct the PCs toward the first encounter. The most important feature here is for the DM to surround the client with an air of mystery. Perhaps the characters never see the client's face, or learn his or her name. Maybe all of their communications are in writing, and they are allowed no information as to where the client can be found.

Mysterious clients can be drawn from any and all character classes, or even from the ranks of monsters. A powerful and intelligent monster that cannot mingle freely with humans might seek thieves to perform some of its business. In the ultimate extreme, of course, the client turns out to be a powerful god or other extraplanar being, and the PCs are involved in really big time trouble before they know what's happening.

The task required of the thieves by the client can include theft, of course. Other possibilities include the search for a lost object, often requiring investigative work as well as stealth; the gaining of information by requiring the characters to serve as spies or scouts; or other even more nefarious tasks invented by the client or the DM.

Role Reversal

An interesting challenge to player characters, and particularly *thief* player characters, is the task of protecting some object from an imminent theft. This story can be combined with the mysterious client plotline to create another twist.

The PCs can be assigned to move the object somewhere, guarding it on the way, or simply to protect it where it is. The challenge arises from anticipating the plans of whatever thieves might be

inclined to make the attempt.

Generally, the PCs will be tested with one or two easy probes before the real challenges occur. The guardianship role can easily be extended through several gaming sessions, as more and more vigorous attempts to acquire the loot are mounted.

This storyline is not as well suited for a longrunning campaign as are some of the others. However, characters who spend most of their time attempting to obtain items of value might find the change of perspective interesting.

Foul Betrayal

This storyline is best combined with one of the others. It fits well in the thief subculture and can be wrapped around any significant non-player character in the campaign. It provides PCs with strong motivation and can dramatically shake up a campaign that starts to run too smoothly.

The NPC who betrays them should be an important figure in the campaign, and one who is fairly well known to the player characters. He can be their employer, or a respected neighbor, or even a mentor or family member to one of the PCs. Ideally, in one of the latter cases, the NPC has a deep and compelling motivation for the betrayal. Most characters, even including thieves, would not be too likely to sell their brother or grandmother down the road for a small profit.

The betrayal should be set up carefully by the DM. Perhaps one or two clues might indicate the NPC's true nature, but only if the players are exceptionally alert. The betrayal itself should not be the end of the story, however; the PCs should have a long and difficult road to follow in their quest for an accounting.

The betrayal situation works best in campaigns where there are many well-detailed NPCs. If it is used capriciously in a setting with few NPCs, players may become inclined to distrust *every* NPC introduced to the game. This is frustrating for players and DM alike.

The Spy

This plotline works most effectively for small groups of player characters, or even individuals. More complex evolutions can involve large groups, all cooperating on an intelligence-gathering mission, but these are harder to run and more confusing to play.

Perhaps more than any other, a spying storyline allows the DM to draw upon a vast store of novels, films, and other media. Plotlines involving spies, even when set outside the fantasy area, can often be converted into challenging roleplaying situations. Substitute a *crystal ball* for satellite reconnaissance, *clairaudience* for a phone tap, and a *flying carpet* for a helicopter, and you will be able to reproduce many a modern thriller in an AD&D® game setting and format.

The spy storyline offers another advantage to many players in that it serves as a non-evil alternative for thief player characters. Of course, spies can be evil, but a spy may also be motivated by grander ambitions than perhaps the common thief. A character or group sent to infiltrate the ranks of a menacing warlord or bandit king can perform great service for the good of society if they can succeed in their mission.

Playing In And Running the Thief Campaign

One of the great strengths of the AD&D® game and its attendant campaign worlds is the diversity of character types that will be present, both as NPCs and generally as PCs. The mixture of combat, stealth, sorcery, and spiritual abilities all add to the whole in ways that can help keep the

game fresh and imaginative even after many years of play.

However, this should in no way inhibit players with similar interests from creating PCs of the same class. Indeed, there are many situations where such groups make ideal adventuring parties—a small group of captains commanding several companies of soldiers upon a mission of conquest, for example, might all be fighters.

Nowhere does this specialization lend itself so well to a campaign setting as when a band of thieves gather to embark upon missions of stealth. The presence of a fighter, with his heavy boots and clanking armor, can be a serious hindrance to such a group. Characters of all other classes will find sheer surfaces to be serious obstacles, even as the thieves are already scrambling down the far side. And indeed, no character can move so quietly, or remain hidden so effectively, as can a thief.

The tactics discussed in this section do not imply that a campaign must be populated exclusively with player character thieves. Players who wish to run characters of other classes should be able to do so, and the DM should be sure to provide appropriate challenges to all characters. However, if most PCs choose to play thief characters, a variety of adventure opportunities beckon. Additionally, interesting roles and activities for other character classes are easy to generate.

Wizards Working With Thieves

Of all the other classes, wizards might best perform with a band of thieves. They have no metal armor or heavy weapons to make noise, and spells such as *levitate* and *silence* can provide cover for themselves, and even enhance the abilities of the thieves. Magic users can be found in all alignments, and many have no particular moral qualms about engaging in theft and other illicit activities.

Wizards can provide a variety of useful services to thieves as well. Even at low levels, spells such as *sleep*, *charm person*, *spider climb*, and *Tenser's floating disk* offer obvious possibilities on a mission of thievery.

Many a thief guild has one or more wizards of low to medium level in its employ, even occasionally among its leadership. Of course, extremely high level wizards generally grow beyond the need for such companionship. High level wizards associated with thieves generally treat the latter as if they were slightly odiferous servants.

Levels of Magic in the Thieves' Campaign

Like any good campaign, the level of magic in use is a function of the players' and DM's desires, the cultural setting, and perhaps to an extent the experience levels of the PCs. Much of this decision should be based on the magical capabilities of the PCs (whether or not the thieves have a wizard working with them, for example) and the degree of reward to be gained by overcoming magical challenges.

In general, most challenges to thief PC missions should be found in forms the characters can cope with: mechanical traps instead of magical ones, for example, provide a better gaming obstacle to thieves.

However, a DM can certainly employ magical traps to protect things he doesn't want the PCs to get their hands on. Also, such traps add an element of tension to a mission that helps keep everyone on their toes. A mission of thievery involving an intrusion into the lair of some powerful wizard should *always* have an air of magical, mysterious danger.

Multi- or Dual-Classed Thieves

Thieves who can also perform the tasks of one or more other character classes also offer clear advantages when accompanying a mission. The fighter/thief, for example, will find many opportunities to wield his sword and perhaps a shield while his stealthy comrades go about their work.

However, thief characters who also exhibit knowledge of another character class will sometimes undergo the scorn and mistrust of their more “pure” comrades. Very rarely will a thief/wizard or thief/cleric rise to a position of prominence in a thieves guild. Fighter/thieves are subject to less prejudice, perhaps because their abilities are clearly understandable to thieves. Fighter/thieves are nonetheless considered by most thieves to be of somewhat lower status than themselves.

Henchmen and Hirelings of Thieves

Though thief characters often function as lone wolves, or in small, stealthy groups, they will often have need of the skills, or sometimes simply the reinforcing numbers, of others. Since thievery activities generally flourish in urban environments, there is usually no shortage of NPCs for the characters to meet and use as henchmen or hirelings.

Hirelings are particularly easy to come by, and can include craftsman and merchants as well as those of the adventuring classes.

Hirelings, however, are not generally trusted with the knowledge of a guild or hideout. They will be contacted in their own place of residence or work, their information or services gained there, and then they will be left by the mysterious thief who disappears into the alleys and backstreets. Even when hirelings are used on a mission, they will often be joined at a rendezvous outside the guild, and left there when the mission is over.

This is not a hard and fast rule, however. Particularly in cases where a guild location is well known, or where hirelings are necessary to the functioning of the guild—there aren’t enough PCs and henchmen to maintain a watch, for example—a hireling will be brought into the lair. Of course, generally some effort will be expended describing to the hireling the consequences of his betraying the great amount of trust that has just been shown him. Indeed, in large thieves guilds it is unrealistic to assume that most members will be PCs or the henchmen of those PCs.

Henchmen, of course, are another matter. They will generally be trusted to know almost everything the PC knows. As with any PC, some henchmen might be gained from the ranks of hirelings who have served loyally and bravely through the years.

Ideally, however, the player and DM should give some thought to interesting backgrounds for other henchmen, based specifically on the player character’s background. This is especially important if the character adventures in the same city or nation where he spent his childhood and youth. It is likely that *some* contacts would have been made during that period—contacts that now offer the potential of valuable help to the aggressive young thief.

In the tangled world of the thief, such longrunning relationships are often the best way to develop a trustworthy companion. Players and DMs should combine to define a henchmen character drawn from a PC’s background. Such a character should not be too powerful, but should be given a few useful abilities. If the henchmen is of an adventuring class, he should be of lower level than the player character.

Dens and Hideouts

Of course, the guildhouse is the most common type of thieves’ den, but nearly all thieves will require some sort of secret lair from which to conduct their illicit activities. Dens and guildhouses will vary by size, in relationship to the number of thieves living or working there; and by obscurity,

appropriate to the level of secrecy the guild needs to maintain in the community.

Some societies expect thieves to flourish in their midst, and among these cities the guild will often be a large, perhaps even prominent building. Of course, it is not likely to have a sign posted, describing the building's nature, but a few discreet inquiries will usually allow one to discover the guildhall. Its location will certainly be known to the city watch or other law enforcers. Indeed, sometimes a watch captain or lord-mayor might allow a thieves guild to function in a known location simply to keep better tabs on it.

But more often the guildhall's location will be a secret, guarded jealously and ruthlessly by the guild. Likewise, a den or hideout serving as a shelter for a small group of thieves will have a discreet and carefully protected location.

Privacy can be found underground, of course. Subterranean thieves lairs offer the advantage that their presence is easily concealed from the outside world. However, many humans and demi-humans (excluding dwarves, of course) dislike the chilly, damp nature of underground living quarters. Thieves who risk their lives to gain objects of value are not likely to hide their wealth and themselves away in a hole in the ground.

Additionally, the underground lair presents problems in construction. Large amounts of dirt must be hauled away, much labor is required in order to create a lair of any size. Both considerations add major difficulties to the secrecy of lair construction. A wizard with a *dig* spell, on the other hand, can make the excavation a whole lot easier, but doesn't solve the problem of dirt disposal.

The easiest type of lair to set up is found in some already existing structure, or perhaps group of structures. A long row of town houses, for example, might be interconnected into a single, convoluted guildhouse. Or the attic of some merchant's shop can be taken by a small band to use as a hideout until they can get something better. Of course, if the merchant doesn't know about the thieves, chances of discovery increase dramatically. The best hideouts are buildings inhabited only by thieves, or by thieves and those who are in league with them.

In some cities it will be necessary for the hideout to maintain some kind of cover. Perhaps it is enough that the neighbors think it abandoned. Maintaining this appearance requires diligence on the part of the thieves, however, for a pattern of noise or light detected from the "abandoned" house will be sure to arouse suspicions.

If a cover is necessary, often a cooperative merchant or craftsman will labor in part of the house, maintaining the pretense of a place of business. Such a worker might even be a thief, but unless he can put forth a reasonable appearance of knowing his cover occupation, the craftsman and the hideout can both be in danger.

Guildhouses and dens may also be maintained as private residences. Such locales are not so likely to be visited by strangers as are cover locations in places of business. However, the residents of the house will probably be known to the neighbors, at least by sight. Large numbers of strangers may give rise to suspicion.

The hideout should ideally have several entrances, at least one of which is a block or two away from the actual den. A large guildhouse will have several such access points, usually connected via underground passages or secret corridors passing through surrounding buildings.

Thus, in a secret guild, the number of people entering and leaving the hall will not be visible to neighbors or other observers. Indeed, if an access route is sufficiently torturous, a visitor can be brought into the guild without being shown the building's exact location. He might know nothing more than that the guild is within several blocks of a certain alley where he stepped through a secret trapdoor in the ground.

A major guildhall will also have several built-in traps to deter unwelcome intruders. If enough thieves man the lair (more than a dozen or so), a full-time watch will be maintained.

Only the most permanent of thieves' dens will have a built-in vault or storage chamber for the loot. When such a chamber exists it is only used for the temporary storage of objects that cannot quickly be fenced. Thieves know only too well that such storage sites are all too easily penetrated. It is much more likely that the thieves will maintain their hoard in some other, nearby but secret location. Of course, thieves who are very brazen about their activities, or very confident that they face no competition in a given locale, may well keep large amounts of valuables in their guildhall. Such a hoard might even be a source of pride to the guild, a sort of challenge to the unwary.